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EAST MESA WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT PLAN

prepared by:

U.S. Dept. of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
California Desert District
El Centro Resource Area

State of California
The Resources Agency
Dept. of Fish and Game

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EAST MESA
WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT PLAN
CA-06WHA-70

A SIKES ACT PROJECT

Prepared by:

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
CALIFORNIA DESERT DISTRICT
EL CENTRO RESOURCE AREA

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
THE RESOURCES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

EAST MESA WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT PLAN

The East Mesa Wildlife Habitat Management Plan was developed and will be implemented under the Sikes Act (PL 93-452).

U. S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
California Desert District

State of California
The Resources Agency
Department of Fish and Game

9/27/82
Gerald E. Hillier — Date
District Manager

7/11/83
Fred A. Worthley, Jr. — Date
Regional Manager
Region 5

ABSTRACT

The East Mesa Habitat Management Plan (HMP) recommends several management actions which will benefit wildlife and botanical resources. Management objectives include maintaining and enhancing the quality of available wildlife habitat and enhancing populations of species of special management concern. Species of special management concern include the flat-tailed horned lizard (*Phrynosoma mcallii*), a BLM (California) Sensitive Species and Federal candidate species; the Yuma clapper rail (*Rallus longirostris yumanensis*), a State-listed Rare and Federally-listed Endangered species; and the California black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus*), a State-listed Rare species. Additional species of interest include 10 bird species on the Audubon Society's 1981 Blue List and a variety of upland game species. Burro deer (*Odocoileus hemionus eremicus*) may also occur incidentally in the area. The HMP, which has been prepared jointly by the Bureau of Land Management and the California Department of Fish and Game, will take approximately three years to implement and will entail a total cost of 15.5 work months and $17,300.00 in additional contract and material costs.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
I.	Introduction	1
II.	Management	4
	A. Management Objectives	4
	B. Planned Actions	4
III.	Evaluation	7
	A. Inventories	7
	B. Studies	7
IV.	Coordination	10
	A. Coordination with Other Programs	10
	1. Recreation	10
	2. Cultural Resources	10
	3. Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)	10
	4. Energy Development	11
	5. Mineral Development	11
	6. Lands	11
	7. Vegetation	12
	B. Coordination with Other Agencies	12
V.	Costs and Funding Needs	13
VI.	Provision for Review and Modification	15
VII.	Appendices	16
	A. Environmental Assessment	A-1
	B. Maps	B-1
	C. References Cited	C-1
	D. Wildlife Species List	D-1
	E. Geothermal Lease Types (USDI, BLM, 1981)	E-1
	F. Individuals and Groups Contacted	F-1
	G. Public Comment and Response	G-1
	H. Desert Plan Constraints	H-1
	I. Participating Staff	I-1

I. INTRODUCTION

This report outlines the Wildlife Habitat Management Plan (HMP) for the area designated in the California Desert Plan (USDI, BLM, 1980) as the East Mesa Wildlife Habitat Area (WHA) and formulates a set of management guidelines by which the area will be administered for the conservation and preservation of wildlife resources. The primary emphasis of this plan is the management of the East Mesa WHA on an ecosystem basis, with special emphasis on species of special management concern. This plan was prepared by the El Centro Resource Area, California Desert District, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDF&G) under authority of the Sikes Act (P.L. 93-452).

The East Mesa WHA is located in southeastern Imperial County. It encompases portions of T. 15 S., Rs. 16, 17, and 18 E.; T. 16 S., Rs. 17, 18, 19, and 20 E.; and T. 17 S., Rs. 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20 E., SBM (see Map 1, page B-2). There is a small amount of private land within the WHA, but the majority of the area is federal land withdrawn by the Bureau of Reclamation (see Map 2, page B-3). The majority of the withdrawn land is managed by the BLM under a 1978 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). However, some lands are under lease agreement to other agencies, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Land ownership and administration within the East Mesa Wildlife Habitat Area.

Land Status	Area	
	mi^2	acres
Bureau of Reclamation Withdrawal		
Under MOU with BLM	158.00	101,120
Under Lease to Imperial Irrigation District (Brock Research Center)	1.00	640
Under Lease to Department of Navy	10.50	6,720
Private	8.75	5,600
TOTAL	178.25	114,080

The East Mesa WHA includes the largest existing contiguous block of prime habitat for the flat-tailed horned lizard (*Phrynosoma mcallii*), a BLM (California) Sensitive Species which is also under Status Review by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Known and potential prime habitat are detailed in Map 3, page B-4.

Habitat throughout the range of the flat-tailed horned lizard is currently being impacted by agricultural development, mineral material extraction, competitive and non-competitive ORV use, and energy- and transportation-related development. In addition, lizard population levels may have been affected by the spraying of DDT and Malathion, either through direct killing of lizards or indirectly through killing of harvester ants (*Veromessor pergandei* and *Pogonomyrmex* spp.), the lizards' primary food source (Rado, 1981). The East Mesa WHA provides an opportunity to maintain a significant portion of the lizards' prime habitat as defined in Turner *et al*, 1980 and Turner and Medica, 1982. The HMP does not, however, preclude competing land uses. Rather, it attempts to provide for competing land uses in a manner compatible with habitat preservation within the WHA.

The WHA also provides habitat for 10 bird species which are included on the Audubon Society's Blue List (Tate, 1981). These include the canvasback (*Aythya valisineria*), marsh hawk (*Circus cyaneus*), sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*), Cooper's hawk (*A. cooperi*), Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), ferruginous hawk (*B. regalis*), American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), cliff swallow (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*), and loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*).

The WHA supports a variety of small game species which are of recreational value for sport hunting. These include white-winged dove (*Zenaida asiatica*), mourning dove (*Z. macroura*), Gambel's quail (*Callipepla gambelii*), and a variety of waterfowl that occur in the All American Canal (see Appendix D, page D-1, for species list).

There are many other species present within the WHA. It is the policy of the BLM and CDF&G and the intent of this HMP to preserve and enhance the habitat supporting these species as well as the habitat of rare species. A complete species list for the WHA may be found in the Final Environmental Assessment Record East Mesa Non-competitive Leases for Geothermal Exploration Development (USDI, BLM, 1981), which also contains a discussion of habitat types within the WHA (see Map 4, page B-5).

In addition to the previously listed animal species, the WHA contains plant species of special concern. It is BLM policy to conserve Federally and State-listed Rare, Threatened, or Endangered plant species as well as Federal candidate species.

In addition, special management consideration is given to plants listed by the California Native Plant Society (CNPS). Plants of special management concern which have been recorded within the WHA include sand food (Ammobroma sonorae; CNPS List 2[1/]), desert sunflower (Helianthus niveus ssp. tephrodes; CNPS List 2; State-listed Endangered), and giant spanish needle (Palafokia arida var. gigantea; CNPS List 3[1/]).

The East Mesa WHA has not been covered by a Management Framework Plan or Unit Resource Analysis under the BLM planning system. The area is within the California Desert Conservation Area and is covered in a broad manner by the California Desert Conservation Area Plan (USDI, BLM, 1980; see Appendix H). The WHA includes portions of the areas covered by the Final Environmental Assessment Record East Mesa Non-competitive Leases for Geothermal Exploration/ Development (USDI, BLM, 1981) and the draft East Mesa Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) Management Plan (USDI, BLM, 1982). In addition to the constraints imposed by these documents, other revelant constraints include the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (P.L. 93 - 205), as amended; the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 USC 1701); DM 6840; CSO IM 80-722, change 1; Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 (84 Stat. 1566; 47 CFR 3200); Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended (30 USC 181 et. seq.); and CSO IM 82-67.

The BLM does not exercise any management or administrative control over either private lands or the Brock Research center lands. Therefore, these areas are excluded from the management prescriptions outlined in the East Mesa HMP.

[1/] California Native Plant Society (CNPS)
List 2 = Rare and Endangered
List 3 = Rare but not Endangered

II. MANAGEMENT

A. Management Objectives

1. Maintain the existing quality of wildlife habitat within the WHA with primary attention to species of special management concern.

2. Maintain viable population levels of all native species, especially those of special management concern.

3. Increase the diversity of habitat types available to wildlife to increase the quality of habitat for raptors and other avian species, and other selected terrestrial species.

4. Establish a basis for a cooperative agreement between BLM and CDF&G within the WHA.

B. Planned Actions

1. Investigate past and present pesticide use in and near the WHA; monitor future use in adjacent areas. Prohibit application of pesticides, except in emergency situations, on BLM-administered land until impacts to flat-tailed horned lizards and their prey bases have been determined to be non-detrimental. The County Agricultural Commissioner and State Department of Agriculture will be notified that the WHA is a sensitive area and that notification and appropriate permits are required before pesticide application.

2. Allow geothermal leasing, and require suitable mitigation as *per* the East Mesa Final Geothermal Leasing Environmental Assessment Record and remain consistent with these guidelines.

3. Where data are not available, request botanical and wildlife (especially flat-tailed horned lizard) inventories be conducted in a manner satisfactory to the authorized officer, in cooperation with CDF&G, to be provided by applicants, before Applications for Permit to Drill (APDs) are processed.

4. Based on survey information recommend no surface occupancy and the use of slant drilling techniques, or moving of drilling sites and/or ancillary facilities in conjunction with oil and gas development; require use of existing roads.

5. Make site-specific recommendations for mitigation of oil and gas development when specific Plans of Operations, Development, Utilization, and Abandonment are received.

6. Recommend that existing (1982) routes of travel which do not conflict with sensitive resources within the WHA be approved for travel during the route designation process, which will be separate from the HMP planning process.

7. Consider racing in the East Mesa (outside of the ACEC) only after monitoring is completed in the Yuha Basin ACEC to determine if mitigatory recommendations implemented in the Yuha Basin ACEC are effective.

8. Form an Interagency Coordinating Committee to coordinate management of the flat-tailed horned lizard throughout its range.

9. Coordinate with the Bureau of Reclamation (BR) to allow BLM and CDF&G to manipulate habitat within the BR right-of-way between All American Canal Drop 3 and the western boundary of the WHA. These lands are excepted from BLM Management in the 1978 MOU. Actions proposed include opening up a channel of open water in the existing marsh area to improve habitat for waterbirds, tamarisk removal, and planting of mesquite, cottonwoods and willow trees along the canal on areas already having a permanent supply of water due to seepage or a high water table.

10. Census unsurveyed areas within the potential prime habitat of the flat-tailed horned lizard.

11. Conduct an annual bird census of the marsh areas adjacent to the All American Canal.

12. Initiate a land exchange/acquisition program for private lands identified on Map 5, page B-6. Land exchange is necessary to prevent habitat loss and to prevent possible impacts of pesticide use when inholdings are converted to agricultural use. Lands to be traded will be identified on a case by case basis depending on the landowner's personal preference. Until such time as these lands may be obtained, no action of this plan is intended to restrict the present private use of these lands. Private access to these lands will not be restricted. It will be necessary to develop specific right-of-way routes to these private lands upon application by the landowners. Access routes to private land must be selected to minimize the impacts to wildlife resources.

13. Increase BLM and CDF&G presence by rangers (BLM), wardens (CDF&G), and other personnel. BLM will program this into its annual work plan, and CDF&G's Wildlife Protection Branch will be notified of this need.

14. Prepare, install, and maintain signs, to be placed at all WHA access roads, detailing the objectives of the HMP and the values being managed. Prepare an information sheet for visitors which discusses wildlife and botanical values present and the actions being implemented for their management.

111. EVALUATION

Biological inventories and studies are necessary to implement, evaluate, and monitor the achievement of management objectives outlined in this plan. Methodology will be determined by BLM and CDF&G.

A. Inventories

1. Inventories of all wildlife and plant species which also emphasize the presence and density of sensitive wildlife and plant species listed in the HMP will be required on a site-specific basis before surface-disturbing activities are permitted. The HMP recommends that these be provided by applicants; however, where this is not feasible, inventories will be conducted by BLM personnel. The results of these inventories will be used to develop appropriate mitigations for each proposed activity.

2. Inventories to more precisely define prime habitat for the flat-tailed horned lizard will be conducted using the following technique. For each section inventoried, four 1.5 mile triangular belt transects will be walked. Transect width will be 4 feet. Numbers and locations of horned lizards, scats, and harvester ant nests, as well as substrate characteristics observed will be recorded on a map showing the specific route followed. Time of day and weather conditions will also be recorded. Sections will be re-inventories on a rotational basis to detect trends, following the same methodology used in the baseline inventory.

B. Studies

1. An annual survey for waterbirds will be conducted in the marsh area identified on Map 4, page B-5. Special emphasis will be given to Yuma clapper rails and black rails and their response to habitat improvement.

2. A study of the impact of pesticide application on the flat-tailed horned lizard and its primary prey species, the harvester ant, will be contracted.

3. Baseline flat-tailed horned lizard studies will be conducted along the route which may be proposed as a future racecourse. The technique will include 20 4 hectare plots along the probable proposed route in addition to the section search outlined in III.A.2. These plots will be surveyed annually so that baseline population levels and trend can

be established. If a racecourse is proposed and approved, plots will continue to be surveyed annually to determine possible impacts of racing on the flat-tailed horned lizard. These data will be used to determine whether competitive events, if permitted, should continue.

IV. COORDINATION

A. Coordination with Other BLM Programs

1. Recreation

According to the Desert Plan's vehicle access designations (USDI, BLM, 1980), the WHA includes both areas in which access is limited to approved routes of travel and those in which access is permitted on existing routes of travel (see Map 10 in USDI, BLM, 1980).

Competitive ORV use occurred in the WHA prior to 1974; BLM has not issued a permit for a competitive ORV event in the East Mesa since 1974. Racing enthusiasts have expressed interest in designating a race course somewhere in East Mesa. Consideration of a race course in East Mesa will be held in abeyance pending the evaluation of the effectiveness of mitigations implemented in the Yuha ACEC. The location of any proposed race course will be outside of the areas within the WHA which are designated as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) (see May 7, page B-8), but may be partially within the extra-ACEC portion of the WHA if mitigations in the Yuha are proven to be effective. Existing travel routes will be utilized where possible. If a race course is proposed in the East Mesa at some future time, an EA will be prepared. If the race course is implemented, monitoring will be done to determine if racing is having a detrimental effect on the flat-tailed horned lizard, and whether racing should be continued.

In addition, recreation in the WHA includes consumptive activities such as hunting (quail, dove, other small game, and possibly deer), fishing in the All American Canal, and non-consumptive uses such as birdwatching, and photography.

2. Cultural Resources

There are two areas within the WHA which have been designated as cultural resource ACECs (see Map 7, page B-8). Cultural resources within the WHA will benefit from the habitat protection policies recommended in this HMP. No surface disturbing activities will take place without the review and concurrence of the Area Archaeologist.

3. Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)

There are three areas within the WHA which have been designated as ACECs (see Map 7, page B-8). These include Lake Cahuilla No. 5 and Lake Cahuilla No. 6, as described under Cultural Resources, and the East Mesa ACEC No. 70, which was designated for wildlife and cultural resource values. The East Mesa ACEC Management Plan has been drafted, and the management prescriptions outlined therein are included in the actions outlined in the HMP. Protection of cultural resource values is generally compatible with protection of wildlife habitat. One area of potential conflict, however, is habitat manipulation, which could impact archaeological sites. Therefore, cultural resource evaluation will be required before surface disturbing activities such as vegetation manipulation can be approved.

4. Energy Development

Over 50% of the WHA is covered by geothermal leases or lease applications (see Map 8, page B-9). Geothermal development in much of the WHA has been addressed in the Final Environmental Assessment Record East Mesa Non-Competitive Leases for Geothermal Exploration/Development (USDI, BLM, 1981); the recommendation of this HMP is to lease per the East Mesa Geothermal EAR. In areas not covered by the EAR, geothermal leasing will not be precluded. However, EAs will be required before any surface disturbing activities are allowed. Where conflicts could occur, recommendations for mitigation will be made.

The entire WHA is also covered by oil and gas leases or lease applications. Leasing will be permitted with recommendations for mitigation where appropriate at the drilling and the operational stages.

5. Mineral Development

The WHA is withdrawn by the Bureau of Reclamation as part of the Yuma Reclamation Project Lands. This first form Reclamation withdrawal precludes mining.

Only one mineral material sale site occurs within the WHA. Demand for this type of material is anticipated to be minimal both because of a lack of suitable unique material (such as sand and gravel) and because of the type of clay present in the WHA.

6. Lands

A joint use planning corridor through the WHA is designated in the Desert Plan (see USDI, BLM, 1980 for map). Continued coordination with the Realty program is therefore anticipated. Applications will continue to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, with mitigations recommended as appropriate.

One of the proposed actions in the HMP is a land exchange/acquisition program. Implementation of this recommendation will involve assistance and coordination with the Realty program, in the identification of lands suitable for exchange as well as in carrying out the actual exchange/acquisition of land.

7. Vegetation

Rare plants within the WHA will benefit from the habitat protection policy recommended in this HMP.

B. Coordination with Other Agencies

The management objectives and planned actions outlined in the HMP were formulated jointly between the California Department of Fish and Game and the Bureau of Land Management. CDF&G will be an active participant in the land exchange/acquisition program. BLM and CDF&G will prepare and submit funding requests both internally and to outside entities. The responsibilities of each agency in the implementation of the HMP are outlined in Section V..

In addition, coordination with the Bureau of Reclamation will be necessary to allow BLM and CDF&G to manipulate habitat within the ER right-of-way between All American Canal Drop 3 and the western boundary of the WHA.

V. COSTS AND FUNDING NEEDS

A. First Year

	Action	Cost*	Agency
1.	Designate approved routes of travel	1 WM	BLM, CDF&G
2.	Flat-tailed horned lizard survey	3/4 WM	BLM, CDF&G
3.	Waterbird survey	1/4 WM	BLM, CDF&G
4.	Coordination with Bureau of Reclamation	½ WM	BLM, CDF&G
5.	Tamarisk removal and planting of cottonwood and willow trees	3/4 WM	BLM, CDF&G
6.	Marshland habitat manipulation	½ WM + $2000 materials	BLM, CDF&G
7.	Create and participate in Interagency Coordinating Committee	½ WM	BLM, CDF&G
	TOTAL	4¼ WM + $2000	

B. Second Year

	Action	Cost	Agency
1.	Flat-tailed horned lizard survey	3/4 WM	BLM, CDF&G
2.	Waterbird survey	1/4 WM	BLM, CDF&G
3.	Participate in Interagency Coordinating Committee	1/4 WM	BLM, CDF&G
4.	Implement land exchange program	3 WM	BLM, CDF&G
5.	Signs and information sheets	1 WM + $300	BLM, CDF&G
6.	Maintain presence	½ WM +	BLM, CDF&G
7.	Contract study on pesticide impacts	½ WM + $15,000	BLM

8.	Increase BLM presence	½ WM	BLM
	TOTAL	6 3/4 WM + $15,300	

Third Year and Beyond

	Action	Cost	Agency
1.	Flat-tailed horned lizard survey	3/4 WM	BLM, CDF&G
2.	Waterbird survey	1/4 WM	BLM, CDF&G
3.	Participate in Interagency Coordinating Committee	1/4 WM	BLM, CDF&G
4.	Maintain presence	1/4 WM	BLM, CDF&G
5.	Continue land exchange program	3 WM	BLM, CDF&G
	TOTAL	4½ WM	

* Average Work Month (WM) costs are: BLM $2550,00; CDF&G $1848.00.

VI. PROVISION FOR REVIEW AND MODIFICATION

The Habitat Management Plan will be reviewed annually to determine if revision or modification is needed. Once a year, the BLM Area Manager and representatives of CDF&G will review progress on implementation of the plan and submit a report to the District Manager. This report will be submitted in time to allow for adjustments in the following year's annual work plan.

The report will indicate the following:

1. Progress made on implementing the plan.
2. Priorities for future implementation.
3. Recommended modifications in the plan or schedule.

The District Manager in cooperation with CDF&G will determine if any recommended modifications are of such a major nature that a new Environmental Assessment (EA) or supplemental EA is required. Such an EA would then be forwarded to all parties to any cooperative agreement for their information and approval. Minor changes, such as revised cost estimates, schedule modifications, etc., would not require a supplemental EA, although some of the individual projects may require supplemental EAs of the Minimal Acceptable Documentation type.

VII. APPENDICES

A. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

for

East Mesa Habitat Management Plan

A. Proposed Action

The East Mesa Wildlife Habitat Area (WHA) includes portions of T. 15 S., Rs. 16, 17, and 18 E.; T. 16 S., Rs. 17, 18, 19, and 20 E.; and T. 17 S., RS. 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20 E., SBM. In summary, the Bureau of Land Management proposes to implement the following actions within the East Mesa WHA:

1. Investigate past and present pesticide use in and near the WHA; monitor future use in adjacent areas. Prohibit application of pesticides, except in emergency situations, on BLM-administered land until impacts to flat-tailed horned lizards and their prey base have been determined to be non-detrimental. The County Agrucultural Commissioner and State Department of Agriculture will be notified that the WHA is a sensitive area and that notification and appropriate permits are required before pesticide application.

2. Allow geothermal leasing and require suitable mitigation as *per* the East Mesa Final Geothermal Leasing Environmental Assessment Record and remain consistent with these guidelines.

3. Where data are not available, request botanical and wildlife (especially flat-tailed horned lizard) inventories be conducted in a manner satisfactory to the authorized officer, in cooperation with CDF&G, to be provided by applicants, before Applications for Permit to Drill (APDs) are processed.

4. Based on survey information, recommend no surface occupancy and the use of slant drilling techniques, or moving of drilling sites and/or ancillary facilitites in conjunction with oil and gas development; require use of existing roads.

5. Make site-specific recommendations for mitigation of oil and gas development when specific Plans of Operations, Development, Utilization, and Abandonment are received.

6. Recommend that existing (1982) routes of travel which do *not* conflict with sensitive resources within the WHA be approved for travel during the route designation process, which will be separate from the HMP planning process.

7. Consider racing in the East Mesa (outside of the ACEC) only after monitoring is completed in the Yuha Basin ACEC to determine if mitigatory recommendations implemented in the Yuha ACEC are effective.

8. Form an Interagency Coordinating Committee to coordinate management of the flat-tailed horned lizard throughout its range.

9. Coordinate with the Bureau of Reclamation (BR) to allow BLM and CDF&G to manipulate habitat within the BR right-of-way between All American Canal Drop 3 and the western boundary of the WHA. These lands are excepted from BLM management in the 1978 MOU. Actions proposed include opening up a channel of open water in the existing marsh area to improve habitat for waterbirds, tamarisk removal, and planting of mesquite, cottonwoods, and willow trees along the canal on areas already having a permanent supply of water due to seepage or a high water table.

10. Census unsurveyed areas within the potential prime habitat of the flat-tailed horned lizard.

11. Conduct an annual bird cunsus of the marsh areas adjacent to the All American Canal.

12. Initiate a land exchange/acquisition program for private lands identified on Map 5, page B-6.

13. Increase BLM and CDF&G presence by rangers (BLM) wardens (CDF&G), and other personnel. BLM will program this into its Annual Work Plan and CDF&Gs Wildlife Protection Branch will be notified of this need.

14. Prepare, install, and maintain signs, to be placed at all WHA access roads, detailing the objectives of the HMP and the values being managed. Prepare an information sheet for visitors which discusses wildlife and botanical values present and the actions being implemented for their management.

B. No Action Alternative

If the management actions outlined above are not implemented, sensitive native wildlife values may be negatively impacted by energy development, and ORV activities. The flat-tailed horned lizard, a BLM (California) Sensitive Species which is also a Federal candidate species, may also continue to decline in numbers as a direct or indirect result or pesticide use; the validity of the suspected link between pesticide use and declines in lizard numbers will not be determined. Habitat values for waterbirds, raptors and passerines, and terrestrial species will decline.

C. Affected Environment

1. Geology - The East Mesa WHA is located in the Southern California portion of the Colorado Desert Physiographic Province along the southeast portion of the Salton Trough. The area consists primarily of a gently alluvial plain.

Currently, the mineral resources within the WHA consist of a significant geothermal potential along with a speculative potential for oil and/or natural gas. The WHA contains portions of two Known Geothermal Resource Areas (KGRAs).

No active or inactive mining claims are presently known to exist within the WHA. The area may have potential for non-metaliferous minerals. However, the land is encumbered by a first form reclamation withdrawal which precludes mining.

Only one permit for extraction of mineral material exists within the WHA. Demand for clay extraction is anticipated to be very low because of the ubiquitous nature of the material present. No potential for extraction of unique materials (sand and gravel) exists.

2. Recreation - Visitor use in the WHA is low, and consists primarily of ORV play and associated camping. Visitor use is concentrated around the Gordon's Well area. Competitive events have not been permitted within the WHA boundaries since 1974.

   Other recreational uses include hunting and bird-watching.

3. Cultural Resources - The WHA includes three cultural resource ACECs (Lake Cahuilla No. 5, Lake Cahuilla No. 6, and East Mesa). The Lake Cahuilla No. 5 and No. 6 are known to contain significant cultural resource values including prehistoric human artifacts and extensive prehistoric campsites. The values within the East Mesa ACEC are speculative, and must be defined by future inventory work.

   Additionally, many historic and prehistoric sites occur in conjunction with the extinct Lake Cahuilla shoreline along the western portion of the WHA. (For additional discussion, see USDI, BLM, 1981).

4. Land Use - The western and southern portions of the WHA are traversed by a joint use planning corridor, as identified in the Desert Plan (USDI, BLM, 1980). These areas also contain several energy and transportation related facilities. A more detailed discussion is presented in USDI, BLM, 1981.

5. Vegetation - The WHA includes four distinct habitat types. These are creosote bush scrub, mesquite dunes, canal-influenced arroweed-tamarisk association, and marsh. Three plant species of special management concern are know to occur within the WHA. A more

detailed discussion is available in Section I of the HMP as well as in USDI, BLM, 1981.

6. Wildlife - Wildlife species diversity within the WHA is relatively high, with a total of 120 species known to occur and an additional 45 species suspected to occur in the area (USDI, BLM, 1981). Key species include Yuma clapper rail, black rail, and flat-tailed horned lizard.

D. Environmental Consequences

Positive consequences are anticipated to vegatation and wildlife resources within the WHA. Vegetation and wildlife, including species of special management concern, will be enhanced by the increased management and protection proposed in the HMP.

Negative impacts to flora and fauna consist of the possibility of alerting users to sensitive resources, which could result in illegal collection and vandalism. Also, some users may express their displeasure with the recommended approved route of travel designations by travelling into closed areas. However, if compliance is achieved, the proposed action is expected to have only minimal negative impacts.

The proposed action will result in some decrease in opportunities for motorcycle play because travel will be permitted only on approved or existing routes (see Map 6, page B-7). Consideration of competitive ORV activity will occur only following the demonstration that mitigations implemented in the Yuha ACEC are effective in limiting competitive ORV impacts. However, since competitive events have not occurred in the area since 1974, no existing use will be affected.

Activities related to energy development should not be seriously affected by recommendations for surveys, and minor adjustments in drill site locations.

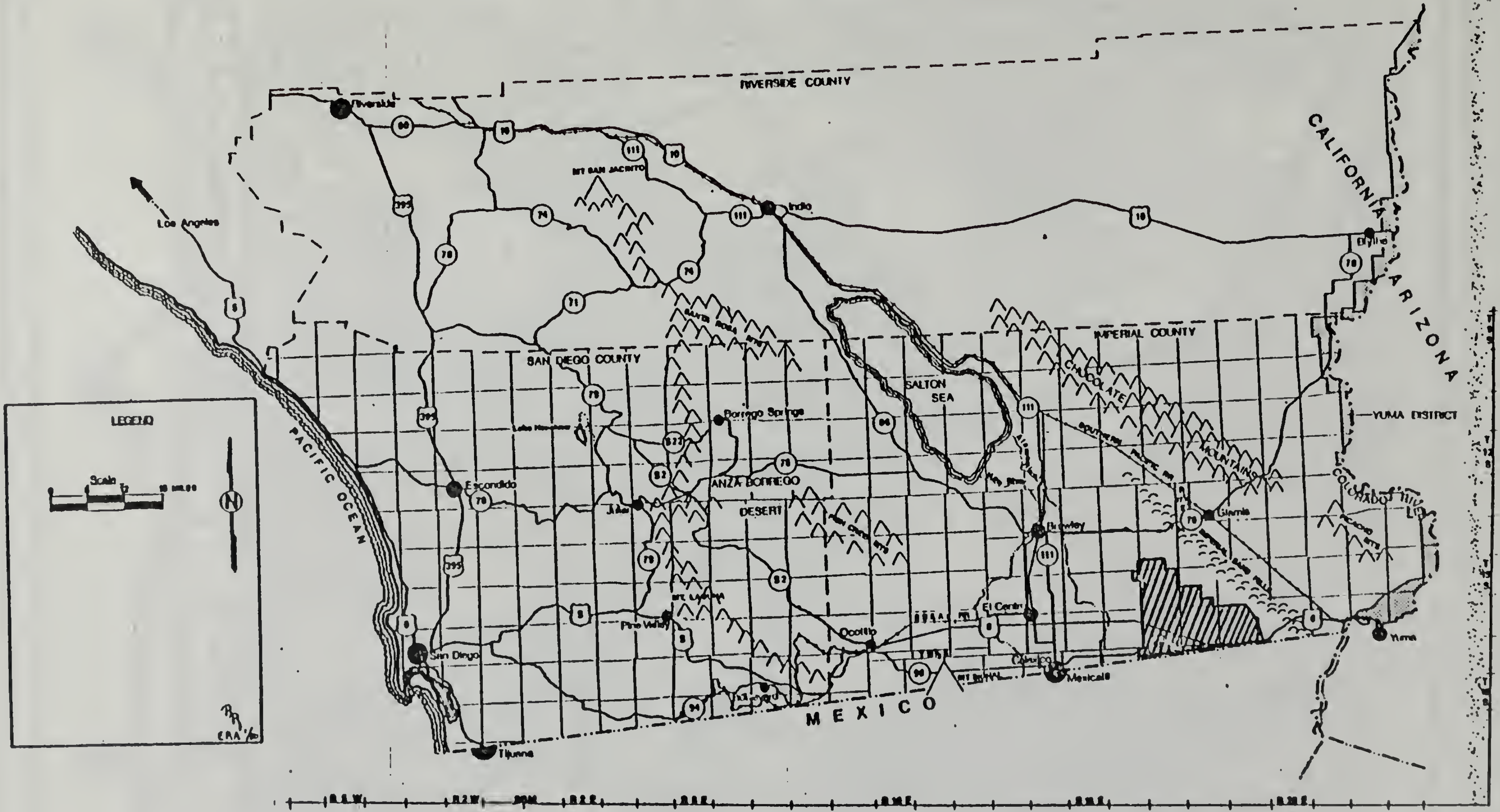
E. Mitigations

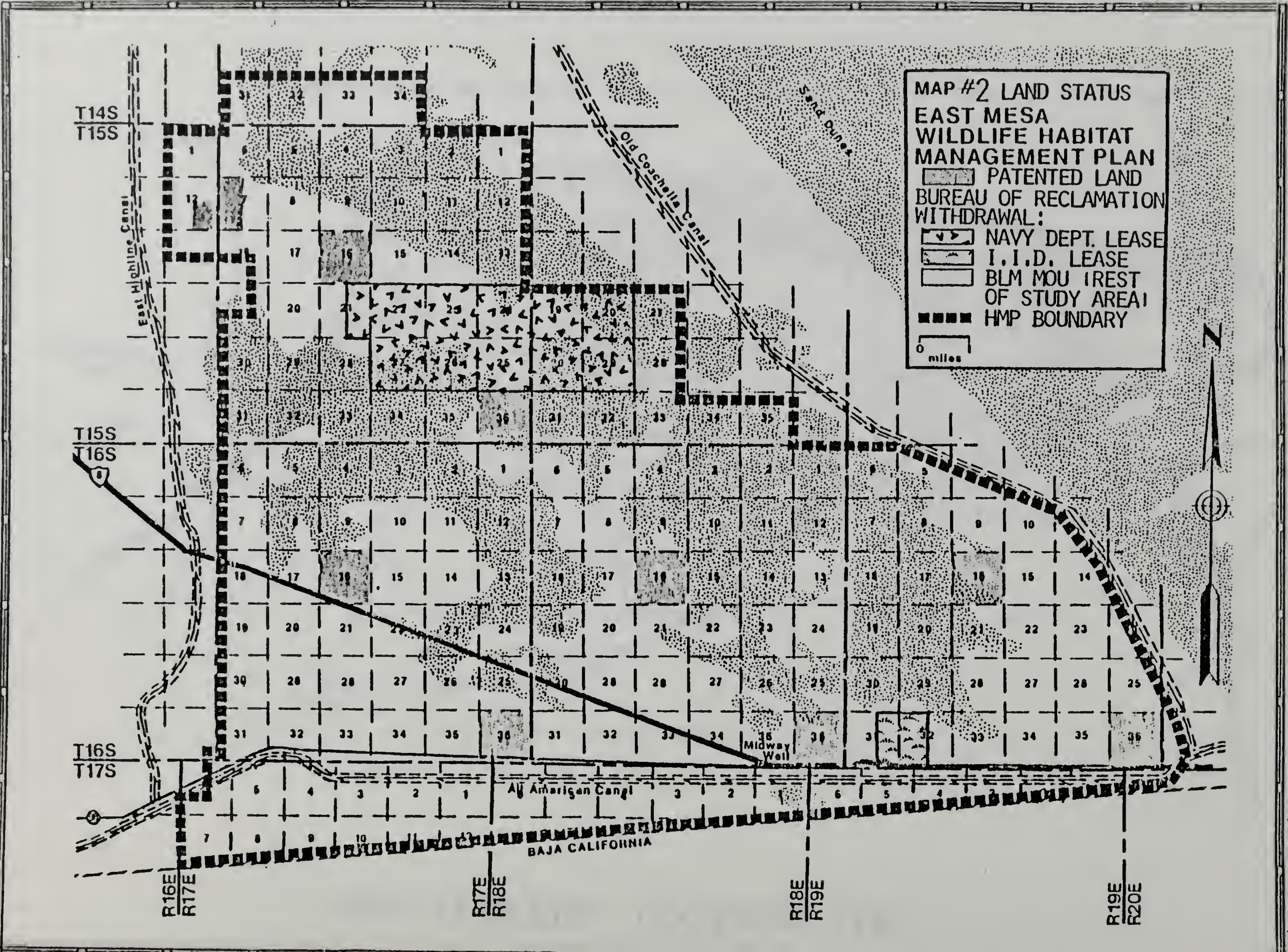
1. Increased Bureau and CDF&G patrol will be used to encourage compliance with road designations.

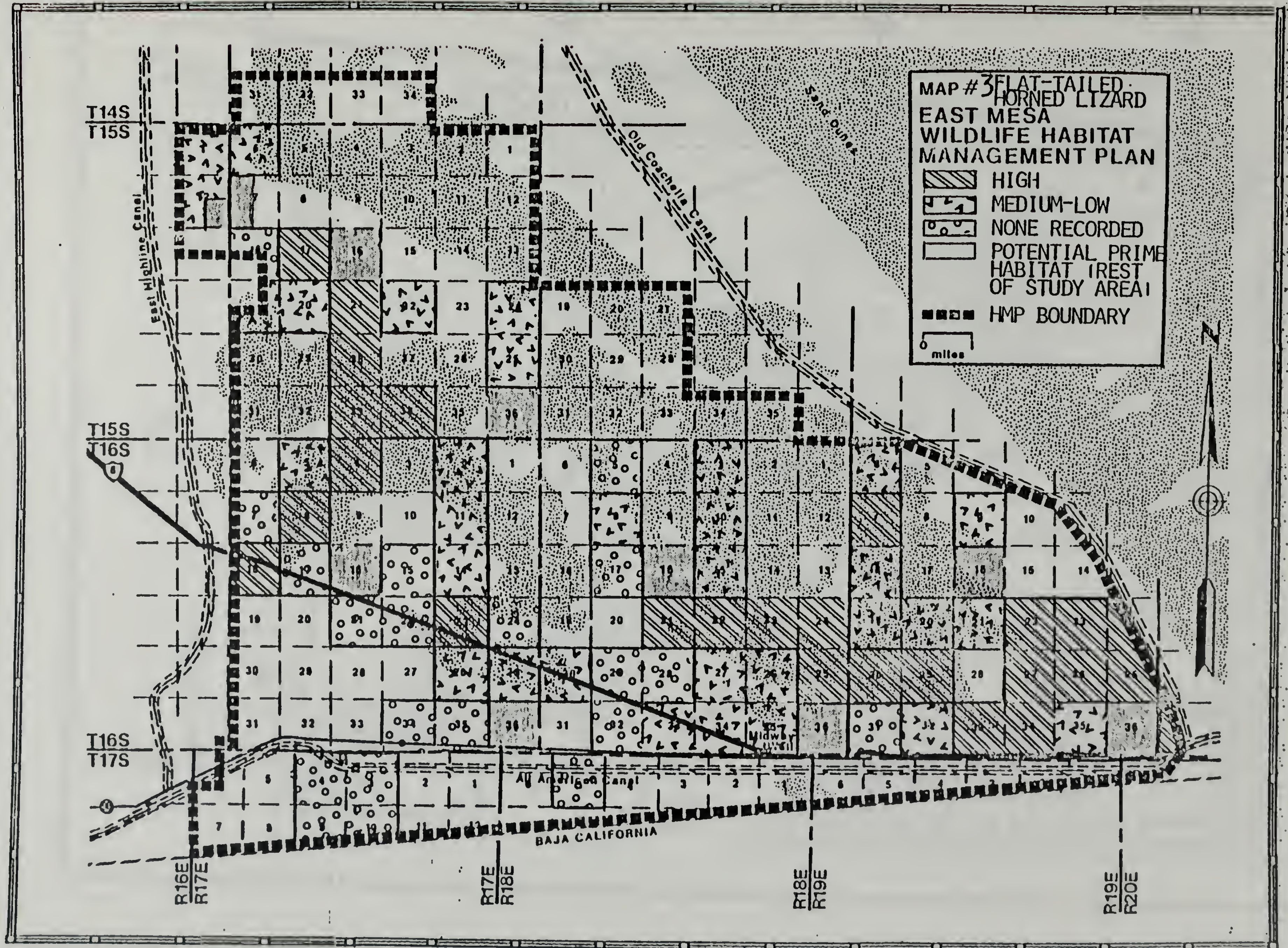
2. Informational signing and information sheets will also encourage compliance with management recommendations.

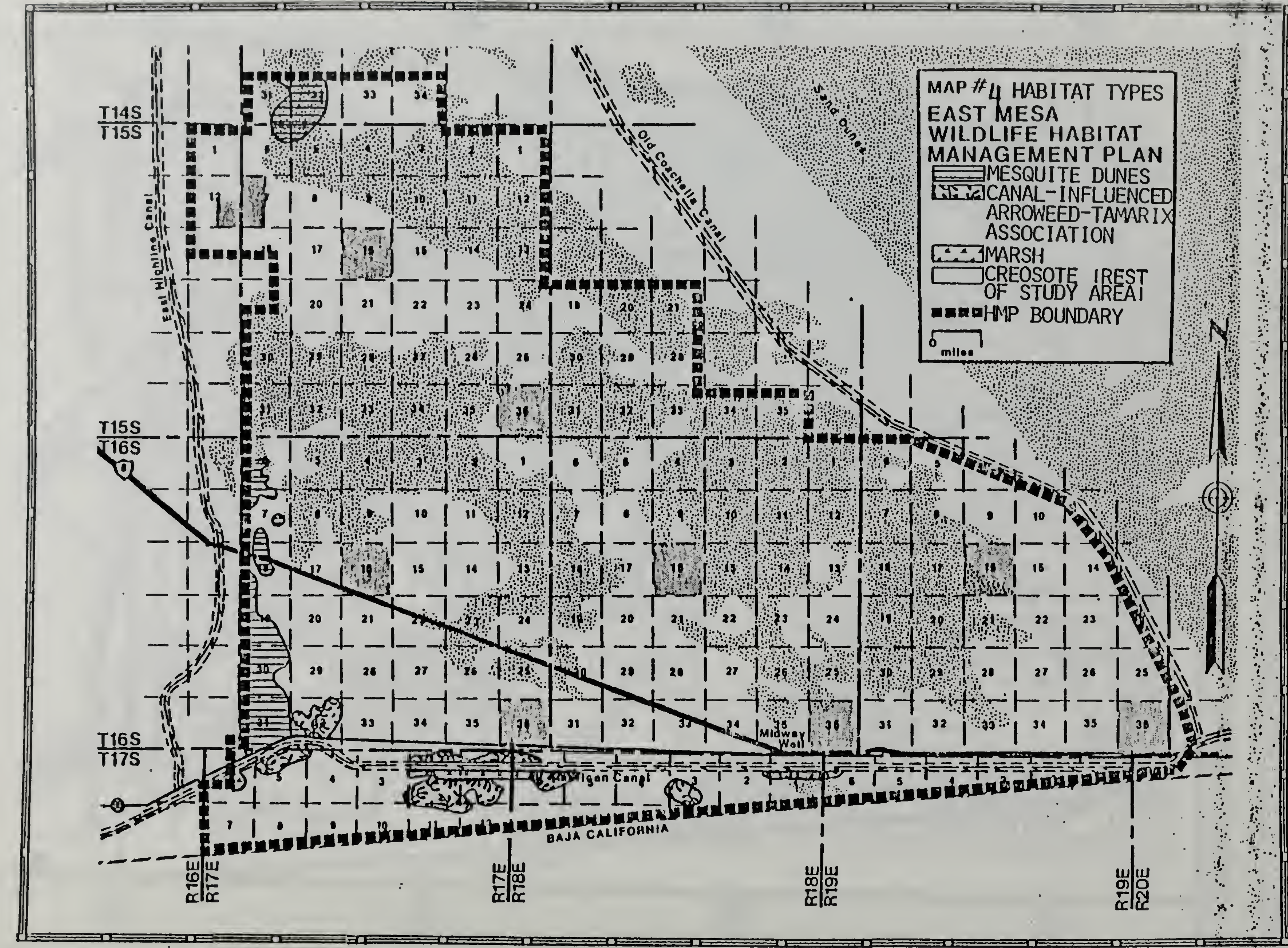
B. MAPS

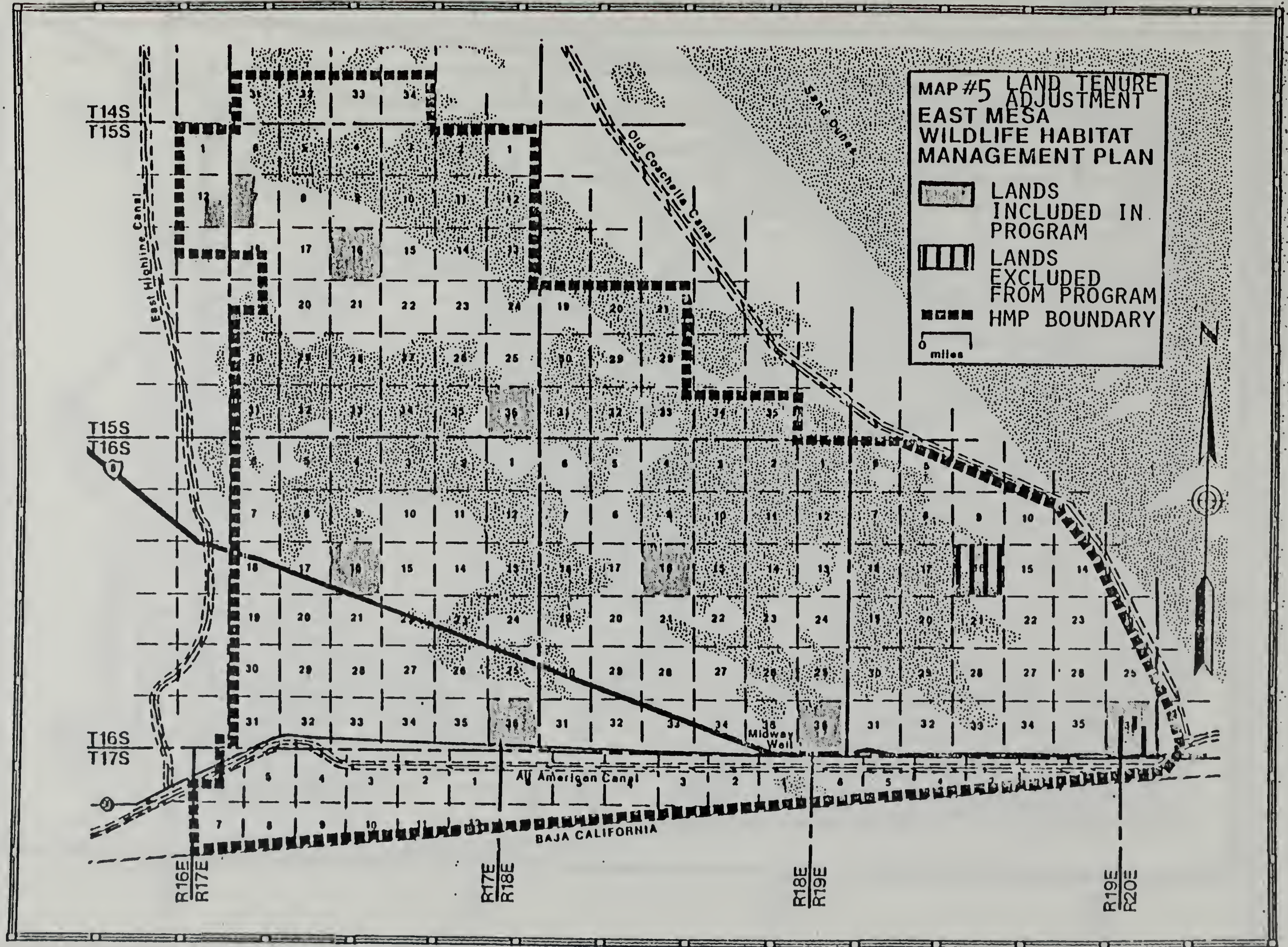
MAP 1. REGIONAL LOCATION MAP

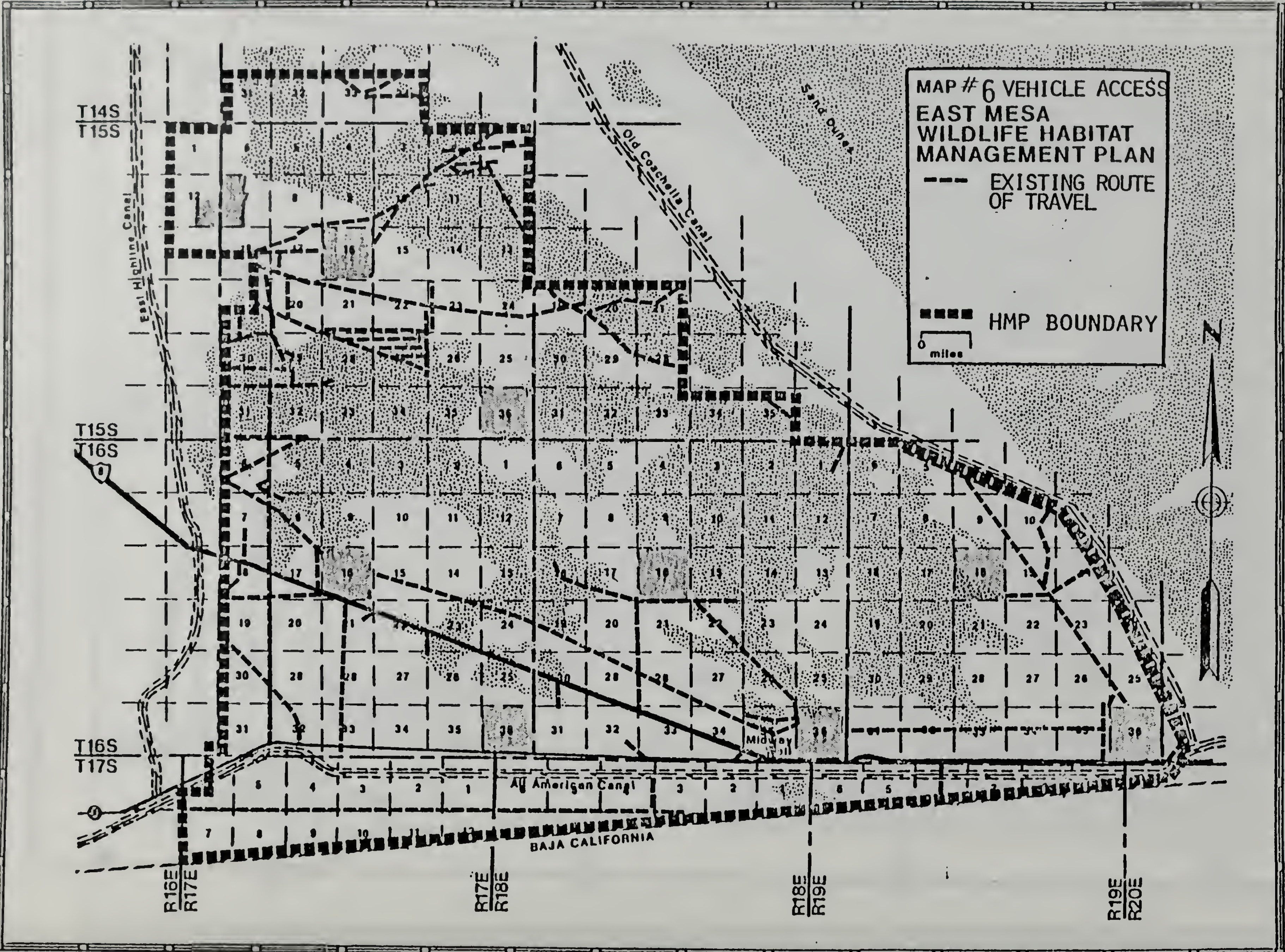



MAP #2 LAND STATUS
EAST MESA
WILDLIFE HABITAT
MANAGEMENT PLAN
PATENTED LAND
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION WITHDRAWAL:
NAVY DEPT. LEASE
I.I.D. LEASE
BLM MOU (REST OF STUDY AREA)
HMP BOUNDARY
0 miles
N
Sand Dunes
Old Coachella Canal
East Highline Canal
All American Canal
Midway Well
BAJA CALIFORNIA
T14S
T15S
T15S
T16S
T16S
T17S
R16E
R17E
R17E
R18E
R18E
R19E
R19E
R20E
8

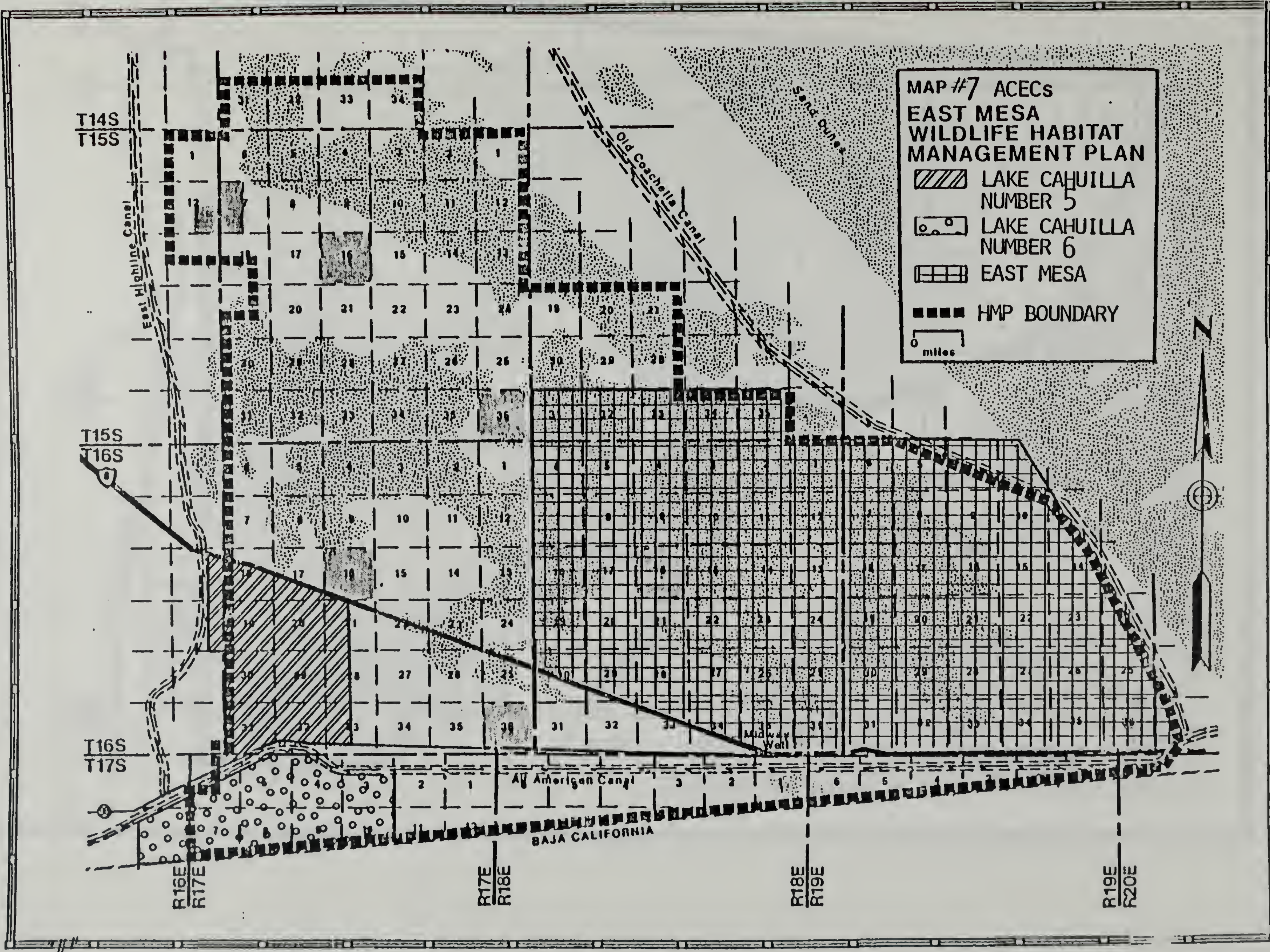

MAP #3 FLAT-TAILED HORNED LIZARD
EAST MESA
WILDLIFE HABITAT
MANAGEMENT PLAN
HIGH
MEDIUM-LOW
NONE RECORDED
POTENTIAL PRIME HABITAT (REST OF STUDY AREA)
HMP BOUNDARY
0 miles
N
Sand Dunes
Old Coachella Canal
East Highline Canal
All American Canal
Midway Well
BAJA CALIFORNIA
T14S
T15S
T16S
T17S
R16E
R17E
R18E
R19E
R20E
8

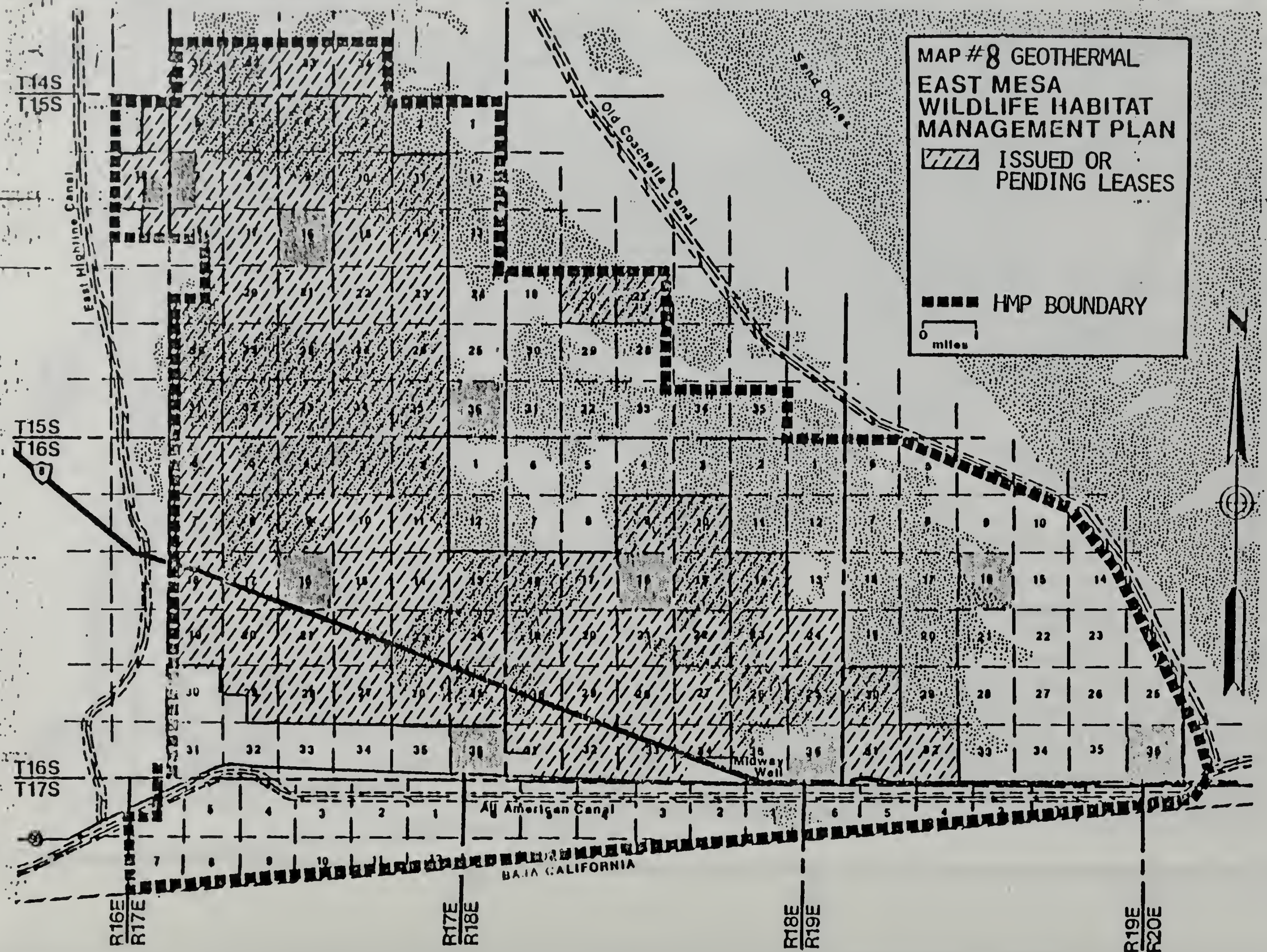

MAP #4 HABITAT TYPES
EAST MESA
WILDLIFE HABITAT
MANAGEMENT PLAN
MESQUITE DUNES
CANAL-INFLUENCED ARROWEED-TAMARIX ASSOCIATION
MARSH
CREOSOTE (REST OF STUDY AREA)
HMP BOUNDARY
0 miles
Sand Dunes
Old Coachella Canal
East Highline Canal
All American Canal
Midway Well
BAJA CALIFORNIA
T14S
T15S
T16S
T17S
R16E
R17E
R18E
R19E
R20E
8


MAP #5 LAND TENURE ADJUSTMENT
EAST MESA
WILDLIFE HABITAT
MANAGEMENT PLAN
LANDS INCLUDED IN PROGRAM
LANDS EXCLUDED FROM PROGRAM
HMP BOUNDARY
0 miles
N
Sand Dunes
Old Coachella Canal
East Highline Canal
All American Canal
Midway Well
BAJA CALIFORNIA
8
T14S
T15S
T15S
T16S
T16S
T17S
R16E
R17E
R17E
R18E
R18E
R19E
R19E
R20E



MAP # 6 VEHICLE ACCESS
EAST MESA
WILDLIFE HABITAT
MANAGEMENT PLAN


MAP #7 ACECs
EAST MESA
WILDLIFE HABITAT
MANAGEMENT PLAN
▨ LAKE CAHUILLA NUMBER 5
LAKE CAHUILLA NUMBER 6
EAST MESA
■■■■ HMP BOUNDARY
0 miles
N
Sand Dunes
Old Coachella Canal
East Highline Canal
All American Canal
Midway Well
BAJA CALIFORNIA
T14S
T15S
T15S
T16S
T16S
T17S
R16E
R17E
R17E
R18E
R18E
R19E
R19E
R20E


MAP #8 GEOTHERMAL
EAST MESA
WILDLIFE HABITAT
MANAGEMENT PLAN
▨ ISSUED OR PENDING LEASES
HMP BOUNDARY
0 miles
N
Sand Dunes
Old Coachella Canal
East Highline Canal
All American Canal
Midway Well
BAJA CALIFORNIA
T14S
T15S
T15S
T16S
T16S
T17S
R16E
R17E
R17E
R18E
R18E
R19E
R19E
R20E

C. REFERENCES CITED

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Tate, J., Jr., 1981. The Blue List for 1981. American Birds 35: 3-10.

Turner, F.B., J.C. Rorabaugh, E.C. Nelson, and M.C. Jorgensen. 1980. A survey of the occurrence and abundance of the flat-tailed horned lizard (Phrynosoma mcallii) in California, USDI, Bureau of Land Management, El Centro, California.

Turner, F.B. and P.A. Medica. 1982. The distribution and abundance of the flat-tailed horned lizard (Phrynosoma mcallii). Copeia 1982(4): 815-823.

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D. WILDLIFE SPECIES LIST
(from USDI, BLM, 1981)

Species	Creosote Bush Scrub	Mesquite Dunes	Canal-Influence Arrowweed-Tamarisk Assoc.	Comments
AMPHIBIANS				
Great Plains Toad				
Bufo cognatus	P			Near canal
Woodhouse's Toad				
Bufo woodhousei			S	
Red-spotted Toad				
Bufo punctatus			S	
Bull Frog				
Rana catesbiana			P	
REPTILES				
Spiny Soft Shell Turtle				
Trionux spiniferus			P	In canals (mainly)
Banded Gecko				
Coleonyx variegatus	P	S	S	
Desert Iguana				
Dipsosaurus dorsalis	P	S	S	
Zebra-tailed Lizard				
Callisaurus draconoides	P	S	S	
Colorado Desert Fringe-toed				
Lizard *Uma notata*	P	P		
Leopard Lizard				
Crotaphytus wislizenii	P	S	S	
Desert Spiny Lizard				
Sceloporus magister	S	S	S	
Side Blotched Lizard				
Uta stansburiana	S	S		
Long-tailed Brush Lizard				
Urosaurus graciosus	S	S	S	
Desert Horned Lizard				
Phrynosoma platyrhinos	P			
Flat-tailed Horned Lizard				
Phrynosoma m'calli	P			
Western Whiptail				
Cnemidophorus tigris	P	P	P	
Spotted Leaf-nosed Snake				
Phyllorhynchus decurtatus	P	S	S	
Red Racer				
Masticophis flagellum piceus	P	S	P	
Desert Patch-nosed Snake				
Salvadora hexalepis hexalepis	P	S	S	
Desert Glossy Snake				
Arizona elegans eburnata	P	S	S	

P = Presence confirmed.

S = Species suspected to occur within habitat type, as determined by the literature, but not observed.

Species	Creosote Bush Scrub	Mesquite Dunes	Canal-Influence Arrowweed-Tamarisk Assoc.	Comments
Gopher Snake *Pituophis melanoleucus*	P	P	S	
Yuma Kingsnake *Lampropeltis getulus yumensis*	S	S	S	
Checkered Garter Snake *Thamnophis marcianus*			S	
Western Ground Snake *Sonora semiannulata*			S	
Colorado Desert Shovel Nosed Snake *Chionactis occipitalis annulata*	P	S		Sandy soils
Western Diamondback Rattlesnake *Crotalus atrox*	S		S	
Sidewinder *Crotalus cerastes*	P	P		
BIRDS				
Eared Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*			S	Seen in canals
Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps*			P	Breeds along cana
Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*	flying over			Seen near canal
Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors*			S	Seen in canal
Cinnamon Teal *Anas cyanoptera*			S	Seen in canal
Green-winged Teal *Anas crecca carolinensis*			S	Seen in canal
Red Head *Aythya americana*			P	Seen in canal
Canvasback *Aythya valisineria*			P	Seen in canal
Bufflehead *Bucephala albeola*			S	Seen in canal
Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*			P	Seen in canal
Common Merganser *Mergus merganser*			S	Seen in canal
Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*	P	P		Resident
Cooper's Hawk *Accipiter cooperi*	P			Migrant

P = Presence confirmed.

S = Species suspected to occur within habitat type, as determined by the literature, but not observed.

Species	Creosote Bush Scrub	Mesquite Dunes	Canal-Influence Arrowweed-Tamarisk Assoc.	Comments
Sharp-shinned Hawk *Accipiter striatus*	S	S	S	Seen flying along canal
Marsh Hawk *Circus cyaneus*	P		P	Winter resident
Ferruginous Hawk *Buteo regalis*	P			Near canal
Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis*	P			Near agriculture, canal
Swainson's Hawk *Buteo swainsoni*	P			Rare migrant
Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*	P			Winter (rare)
Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*		P		Seen along canal
Prairie Falcon *Falco mexicanus*	P	P		Uncommon
American Kestrel *Falco sparverius*	P			
Gambel's Quail *Lophortyx gambelii*	P	P	P	Breeds
Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*			P	
Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*			P	
Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*			S	Seen along canal
Virginia Rail *Rollus limicola*			P	
Sora *Porzana carolina*			S	
Black Rail *Laterallus jamaicensis*			S	
Yuma Clapper Rail *Rallus longirostris yumanensis*			P	
Common Gallinule *Gallinula chloropus*			P	

P = Presence confirmed.

S = Species suspected to occur within habitat type, as determined by the literature, but not observed.

Species	Creosote Bush Scrub	Mesquite Dunes	Canal-Influence Arrowweed-Tamarisk Assoc.	Comments
American Coot *Fulica americana*			P	
American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana*			P	
Blacknecked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus*			P	
Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus*		P	P	Seen along canal
Long-billed Curlew *Numenius americanus*			S	
Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularia*			P	Seen along canal
Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca*		S	P	Near canal
Dowitcher *Limnodromus* sp.			S	
Western Sandpiper *Calidris mauri*			S	
Wilson's Phalarope *Steganopus tricolor*			S	
Forester's Tern *Sterna forsteri*			P	
White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica*	P	P	P	Breeds
Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura*	P	P	P	Breeds
Ground Dove *Columbina passerina*	S	P	P	Breeds
Roadrunner *Geococcyx californianus*	P	S	S	Breeds
Burrowing Owl *Speotyto cunicularia*	P		P	Breeds
Poor-will *Phalaenoptilus nuttalli*	P	P		
Lesser Nighthawk *Chordeiles acutipennis*	P	P	P	Breeds
Vaux's Swift *Chaetura vauxi*	P			Near canal
White-throated Swift *Aeronautes saxatalis*	P			Near canal
Anna's Hummingbird *Calypte anna*		P	P	
Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon*			S	Seen along canals

P = Presence confirmed.

S = Species suspected to occur within habitat type, as determined by the literature, but not observed.

Species	Creosote Bush Scrub	Mesquite Dunes	Canal-Influence Arrowweed-Tamarisk Assoc.	Comments
Ladderbacked Woodpecker *Dendrocopos scalaris*	S	P	P	Breeds
Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis*		P	P	Breeds
Ash-throated Flycatcher *Myiarchus cinerascens*	S	P		Breeds
Eastern Phoebe *Sayornis phoebe*			P	Vagrant
Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans*			P	
Says Phoebe *Sayornis saya*	S			See along canal
Western Wood Peewee *Contopus sordidulus*		P		
Olive-sided Flycatcher *Nattallonis borralus*	S			Canal/Agric.
Vermillion flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus*			S	
Horned Lark *Eremophila alpestris*	P			Breeds
Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*	P	P	S	
Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*	P			Near canal
Violet Green Swallow *Tachyceneta thalassina*			S	Along canal
Tree Swallow *Iridoprocne bicolor*	P			Near canal
Rough Winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*	P			Near canal
Common Raven *Corvus corax*	P	P		
Verdin *Auriporus flaviceps*	P	P	P	Breeds
House Wren *Troglodytes aedon*		P		
Bewicks Wren *Thryomanes bewickii*		P		
Cactus Wren *Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*	P	P	P	Breeds
Long-billed Marsh Wren *Telmatodytes palustris*			P	

P = Presence confirmed.

S = Species suspected to occur within habitat type, as determined by the literature, but not observed.

Species	Creosote Bush Scrub	Mesquite Dunes	Canal-Influence Arrowweed-Tamarisk Assoc.	Comments
Rock Wren *Salpinctes obsoletus*				Canal edge
Mockingbird *Mimus polyglottos*	P			Canal edge
LeConte's Thrasher *Toxostoma lecontei*	P	P		Breeds
Crissal Thrasher *Toxostoma dorsale*		P	P	
Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulata*				Canal/Agric.
Mountain Bluebird *Sialia currucoides*	P			Winter
Blue Gray Gnatcatcher *Polioptila caerulea*	P			
Black-tailed Gnatcatcher *Polioptila melanura*	P	P	P	Breeds
Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Regulus satrapa*	P	P	P	
Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*			S	Canal
Phainopepla *Phainopepla nitens*		P		Canal
Loggerhead Shrike *Lanius ludovicianus*	P	P	P	Breeds
Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*	P	P		
Warbling Vireo *Vireo gilvus*		P		
Orange Crowned Warbler *Vermivora celata*		P		Migrant
Nashville Warbler *Vermivora ruficapilla*	P			Migrant
Yellow Warbler *Dendroica petechia*			S	Canal/Agric., Migrant
Yellow-rumped Warbler *Dendroica coronata*	P	P	P	Winter
Townsend's Warbler *Dendroica townsendi*	P			Migrant
Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas*			P	
MacGillivray's Warbler *Oporornis tolmiei*			P	Migrant

P = Presence confirmed.

S = Species suspected to occur within habitat type, as determined by the literature, but not observed.

Species	Creosote Bush Scrub	Mesquite Dunes	Canal-Influence Arrowweed-Tamarisk Assoc.	Comments
Wilson's Warbler *Wilsonia pusilla*		P	P	Along canal
House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*			P	Along canal
Yellow-headed Blackbird *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*	P			Along canal
Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus*	P	P	P	
Brewers Blackbird *Euphagus cyanocephalus*			S	Along canal
Brown-headed Cowbird *Molothrus ater*			P	
Great-tailed Grackle *Cassidix mexicanus*			P	
Scott's Oriole *Icterus parisorum*	P	P		
Hooded Oriole *Icterus cucullatus*		P	S	
Northern Oriole *Icterus galbula*		P		
Western Tanager *Piranga ludoviciana*	P			Near canal, Migrant
House Finch *Carpoclacus mexicanus*	P	P		
American Goldfinch *Spinus tristis*			S	Along canal
Lesser Goldfinch *Spinus psaltria*			S	Along canal
Abert's Towee *Pipilo aberti*		P	P	Breeds
Savannah Sparrow *Passerculus sandwichensis*	S			Near canal
Sage Sparrow *Amphispiza belli*	P			
Chipping Sparrow *Spizella passerina*	P			
Brewer's Sparrow *Spizella breweri*	P		P	
White-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia leucophrys*	P	P		
Lincoln's Sparrow *Melospiza lincolnii*		S	S	Along canal
Song Sparrow *Melospiza melodia*			S	Along canal

P = Presence confirmed.

S = Species suspected to occur within habitat type, as determined by the literature, but not observed.

Species	Creosote Bush Scrub	Mesquite Dunes	Canal-Influence Arrowweed-Tamarisk Assoc.	Comments
MAMMALS				
California Myotis *Myotis californicus*	S	S	S	May fly through area
Western Yellow Bat *Lasiurus ega*	S	S	S	
Hoary Bat *Lasiurus cinereus*		S	S	Migrates
Western Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus hesperus*		S	S	Flys along watercourses
Spotted Bat *Euderma maculata*	S	S	S	
Mexican Freetail Bat *Tadarida brasiliensis*	S	S	S	Migrates
Black-tailed Jackrabbit *Lepus californicus*	P	P	P	
Audubon Cottontail *Sylvilagus audubonı*		P	P	
Round Tailed Ground Squirrel *Citellus tereticaudus*	P	S	S	
Valley Pocket Gopher *Thomomys bottae*	P	S	P	
Little Pocket Mouse *Perognathus longimembris*	S	P	S	
Spiny Pocket Mouse *Perognathus spinatus*	S	S	S	
Little Desert Pocket Mouse *Perognathus arenarius*	S	S		
Merriam Kangaroo Rat *Dipodomys merriami*	S	P		
Desert Kangaroo Rat *Dipodomys deserti*	S	S		
White Throated Woodrat *Neotoma albigua*	P			
Muskrat *Ondatra zibethica*			S	Seen along canal
Kit Fox *Vulpes macrotis*	P			
Gray Fox *Urocyon cinereoargenteus*	P			
Coyote *Canis latrans*	P	P	P	
Raccoon *Procyon lotor*			P	

P = Presence confirmed.

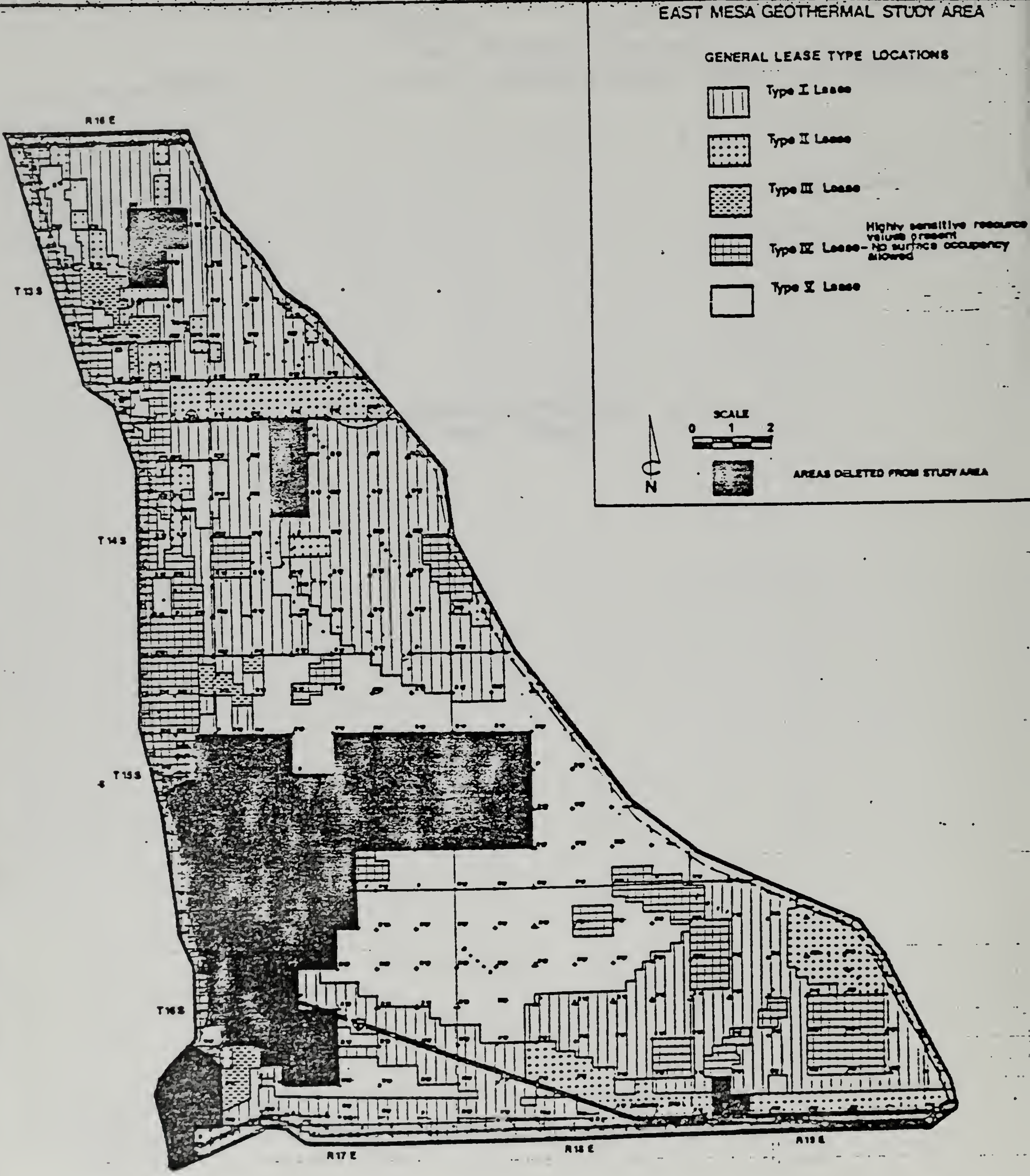
S = Species suspected to occur within habitat type, as determined by the literature, but not observed.

Species	Creosote Bush Scrub	Mesquite Dunes	Canal-Influence Arrowweed-Tamarisk Assoc.	Comments
Badger _Taxidea_ _taxus_	P	S	S	
Striped Skunk _Mephitis_ _mephitis_	P			Near canal
Mule Deer _Odocoileus_ _hemionus_	S	S	P	

P = Presence confirmed.

S = Species suspected to occur within habitat type, as determined by the literature, but not observed.

E. GOETHERMAL LEASE TYPES
(USDI, BLM, 1981)


EAST MESA GEOTHERMAL STUDY AREA
GENERAL LEASE TYPE LOCATIONS
Type I Lease
Type II Lease
Type III Lease
Type IV Lease - Highly sensitive resource values present - No surface occupancy allowed
Type V Lease
SCALE
0 1 2
N
AREAS DELETED FROM STUDY AREA
R 16 E
T 13 S
T 14 S
T 15 S
T 16 S
R 17 E
R 18 E
R 19 E

Those areas shown on Map IV-1 as highly sensitive will not be considered for surface occupancy leasing (lease type IV). Access to subsurface geothermal resources will be from adjacent lands.

Those areas on Map IV-1 which are designated as sensitive will be considered for surface occupancy leasing only when there is a demonstrated need for access which will directly benefit the development of the geothermal resource (lease types I, II and III). The sensitive areas will be leased with no provisions for surface occupancy described; however, the lessee will be required to petition the BLM for surface occupancy rights for specific site development at the same time the lessee submits plans of operations to the USGS. It will be the responsibility of the lessee to provide BLM with the necessary information demonstrating the need for surface access, as well as the necessary surface resource investigations of existing conditions on that site. Through the ensuing EA studies prepared for the plans of operation, the BLM will study the requests for surface occupancy and apply appropriate mitigation to those requests which are approved.

In instances of permitted geothermal development within a sensitive area, the lessee will be required to minimize surface disturbances by utilizing design techniques and geothermal development engineering techniques which will be the least consumptive of surface area, such as well head islands and directional drilling techniques and minimum spacing of buildings, equipment, roads, etc.

The total area of surface disturbance for the development of a 50 MW powerplant shall not exceed seven percent of the lease area when it occurs within a sensitive area. This percent was derived from generalized data presented by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USDI, USF&WS, 1978); see Table IV-1. However, the estimated extent of disturbance within sensitive areas should most often approach three percent; see Table IV-2. This percent is based upon current disturbance levels present on East Mesa (KGRA) where both island well heads and dispersed well heads have been constructed.

F. INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS CONTACTED

The following persons or groups were sent a draft copy of the East Mesa HMP and E.A. for review:

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* Comments received, see Appendix G

The following persons or groups were notified that draft copies of the East Mesa HMP were available for review upon request:

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- Jack Duffey
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- Energy & Natural Resources Consultants
- Robert Fusco, California Wildlife Federation
- Lyle Gaston
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- Gordon's Well Investors
- S. and L. Gottlieb
- Mr. & Mrs. Mike Grubbs
- Clifford Gruenberg
- H. Hitt
- I. and M. Hobson and C. Porter
- Dr. Don Hunsaker III
- Mr. & Mrs. J.H. Hutchens
- Imperial Jojoba
- Interstate Farms
- J.N. Jameson
- Valley Jojoba
- Jayne I. Kenberry
- Jim Kostrycki
- Mrs. A. R. Kramar
- Clyde E. Kuhn
- R. La Garza
- La Jojoba Mesa
- Grace Lindstrom c/o C.P. Maskal
- Los Angeles County Natural History Museum
- J.D. Lusby
- C.J. Maggio
- Magma Electric Company
- Roy Martin
- N. McDaniel
- Dan McDougal
- Joseph McKinney
- F. McShane
- Mae Z. Medav
- Missmar Enterprises

Robert Orchard and Thomas Lynott
Orchard Jojoba Plantation One
Frank Perreten and D.S. Johnson
John Leo Polich
Mike Richmond
Dr. J.A. Rodney
Tom Rolf, Range Operations, Naval Air Facility
Dr. Rodolfo Ruibal
San Diego Natural History Museum
Robert Sandison c/o Calvin Johnson
Selected Properties
J.T. and C.B. Sessions
Sharp Investments
B.A. Smith c/o A. Bevis
Shelby Smith
State of California, Water Resource Control Board
Barbara J. Taylor
Dr. Lloyd Tevis
A.S. Thomas
Chong Hoy Tong
I. Torvend
Ruth Ellen Ubland
Union Oil Co. of California
U.S. Geological Survey, Palo Alto
USGS Conservation Division, Menlo Park
USGS Conservation Division, Reno
Valley Jojoba Ranches
V.T.N., Attn: Walter Loo
V.T.N., Attn: J.L. Sakaguchi
Helen Waddell
J.E. Walstorm
M.K. Wehner
Y.J. Winslow

G. PUBLIC COMMENT AND RESPONSE

LETTER #1

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA gas COMPANY

3700 CENTRAL AVENUE • RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA

MAILING ADDRESS: P. O. BOX 2200, RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA 92516-2200

July 1, 1982

United States Dept. of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
El Centro Resource Area
333 South Waterman Avenue
El Centro, CA 92243

Attention: Roger D. Zortman

Re: East Mesa Habitat Management Plan

The Southern California Gas Company has no comments to make at this time but we do wish to remain on your mailing list for future developments in the County of Imperial that comes under your department.

Thank You,

A. R. Valencia
Senior Planning Technician

ARV/ds

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY:

A.R. Valencia
Senior Planning Technician
Southern California Gas Company

No response necessary.

LETTER #2

J C Farming Co.

(213) 553-6696

1925 CENTURY PARK EAST SUITE 290
LOS ANGELES, CA 90067

~~1900 AVENUE OF THE STARS • SUITE 570~~
~~LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90067~~

July 26, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
United States Dept. of the Interior
El Centro Resource Area
333 South Waterman Avenue
El Centro, California 92243

RE: 6620 (C-067.23)
East Mesa Wildlife Habitat Management Plan

Attention: Roger D. Zortman
Area Manager

Gentlemen:

I received a copy of the above referenced study and have been requested to comment upon it.

We own 640 acres on the East Mesa, and are currently farming 320 acres of it, with plans to put the balance into agricultural use within the next twelve months. We have invested over $1,000,000 into our property on the East Mesa to date and, consequently, have a very substantial economic investment in what takes place on the Mesa. The location of our property is Section 16, Township 15 South, Range 17 East. Our property is located outside the "areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs)."

We are very supportive of the steps you are taking to handle the management of the wildlife and its habitat on the Mesa. We have established a similar policy, instructing our personnel to conduct themselves to protect the wildlife habitat on the East Mesa, including driving only on established roadways.

We would like to make the following suggestions to the East Mesa plan:

2.1 1) Automobile racing should not be allowed to take place on the East Mesa. There are already established areas for racing, and the East Mesa habitat would not be compatible for such a use. Once racing was established in such an area, there would be virtually no way to control all the types of vehicular traffic over and across all parts of the Mesa. Racing has the potential of attracting thousands of vehicles and, unless the BLM is prepared to fence the entire Mesa not designated for racing, they would be encouraging uncontrolled destruction of the habitat in and outside the ACECs. It is inconceivable that this use would be considered on the Mesa, and I request that an environmental impact study as well as public hearings be held prior to any such use being permitted.

2.2 2) Farming on BLM land should be considered on property held outside of the ACECs. This could be initiated on the basis of leases with the BLM or outright sale or exchange in order to use the funds to acquire critical property that is now not under BLM management within the ACECs.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the report, which was well prepared. It would be appreciated if the above suggestions could be included in the Habitat Management Plan. If not, I would appreciate receiving a written reply indicating why these items were not incorporated in the Plan. Please retain my name on your mailing list for additional information as it pertains to the East Mesa.

Sincerely,

Calvin H. Johnston
General Partner

CHJ:pbp

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO
COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY:

Calvin H. Johnson
J. C. Farming Company

COMMENT #	RESPONSE
2.1	The East Mesa HMP does not propose a race course; in fact, it states that such a proposal will be considered only after additional data is collected, and only if such data indicated that the impacts of racing are mitigable. Monitoring will be carried out if such a course is permitted in the future, in order to assure habitat maintenance. ORV racing occurred for many years in East Mesa; nevertheless, BLM effectively halted this use after 1974. Racing events in the past never attracted thousands of vehicles and never promoted widespread habitat damage. Any new proposal will be subject to the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and public input.
2.2	This topic has been addressed in the California Desert Conservation Area Plan.

LETTER #3

3750 El Canto Drive
Spring Valley, CA 92077
July 26, 1982

Roger D. Zortman, Area Manager
Bureau of Land Management
333 South Waterman Avenue
El Centro, CA 92243

Re: East Mesa WHA

Dear Mr. Zortman:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment upon the East Mesa Wildlife Habitat Management Plan.

In general, I support the staff recommendation for the management of wildlife values in the East Mesa Region. However, I would add a few suggestions and urge the BLM to address the issues raised.

3.1 Though the document, on page 5, provides for future review of the Brock Research Center if its status changes, no mention is made of the plans for the Navy area if the Navy lease status changes or its current use patterns change. Furthermore, the Navy is not listed among the coordinating agencies on page 16 though its 12½+ [illegible] constitute a significant portion of the Area to be managed for wildlife.

I would submit a few specific comments on the Planned Action, pages 6-9, though in general I support them.

3.2 - Action #1: If the term "pesticides" includes herbicides and/or rodenticides, or would involve chemicals or organisms which might effect native plant species as a side effect, then the impacts on those flora (included of federal, state and CNPS lists should be made a part of Action #1 paragraph.

3.3 - Action #6: Is this action consistent with the June 30, 1982 ruling of Judge A. Wallace Tashima? Even though the Desert Plan map identifies this areas a M, the presence of the ACESs and critical habitat and cultural areas must argue in favor of limited access routes.

Furthermore, will there be an opportunity for public and expert input into the process prior to the decision? How will this be coordinated?

3.4 - Action #7. This appears to be a reasonable decision. However, there does not seem to be an opportunity for public input on the recommendations developed with in the Yuha Basin ACES.

3.5 a. Are the similarities of geography, soil, flora, fauna and cultural resources so identical that data and recommendations can be extrapolated?

3.6 b. Furthermore, there is no requisite for a determination of NEED for an additional race course as per testimony submitted in 1977.

3.7 - Action 12: Will there be an opportunity for formal public input?

3.8 Under the Coordination section, pages 12-15, cultural values are listed in A-2 and A-3 on page 13, yet there is not any reference in the management objectives (pages 6-9) which references the problem. I would respectfully suggest that BLM add a paragraph under Planned Actions which would clarify and formalize BLM's position, thus preventing future problems due to omissions. Such a paragraph would demonstrate BLM's intentions relative to Action items numer 3,4,5,6,,7,,9,12. (See also,ACEC testimony, June 1982)

There are two areas in which the Desert Protective Council could assist the BLM under President Reagan"s "let the private sector help."

3.9 - Action # 9: The DPC has launched a Riparian Enhancement and Protection Program (see page 3 of enclosed EL PAISANO) and could assist the BLM in improving some of the marsh habitat areas identified. (The DPC and Sierra Club have assisted BLM in the past on such projects as fencing the Blythe intaglios,) .

- Action 14: The DPC has some funds in its Educational Foundation which have been offered to the BLM El Centro office (January 1982) for the publication of materials.

It would be appreciated if the BLM would keep my name on the mailing list for East Mesa Area. It is difficult for the public to keep up with all the bits and pieces of the planning and implementation of the El Centro Office and to establish a coordinated program prospectus.

Harriet Allen
Harriet Allen

cc: DPC
SC

Published by the Desert Protective Council, Inc.
P. O. Box 4294, Palm Springs, CA 92263

Spring 1982 Harriet Allen, Editor Number 107

OPINIONS OF MEMBERS SUMMARIZED

In late 1981, the Directors requested each member to submit a list of priorities that you wanted DPC to address in 1982. Summarized below are your concerns though they are not in any ranked order.

- Maximize wilderness designation with emphasis on East Mojave units
- Implementation & monitoring of the California Desert Plan, especially in Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)
- Protection of E.Mojave Scenic Areas
- Regulation of ORV use
- Protection of habitat for endangered and rare species primarily big horn sheep, tortoise, fringe-toed lizards
- Santa Rosa Mt habitat problems: Bighorn vs development
- Mining projects effecting Death Valley, Lake Mead, Glen Canyon
- General energy development i.e., coal-fired plant in Ivanpah Valley
- Need to become more politically involved
- Public education
- Sale of desert post cards

DPC will focus on the above priorities as well as those listed in El Paisano, No. 106. Thank you for your thought constructive responses.

- Chuck Bell, President

NEW STATE WILDERNESS AREAS

On April 9th, the State Park and Recreation Commission classified eleven roadless units as wilderness in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. Though individually named, the new units plus the two which were designated last year will be named the Anza-Borrego State Wilderness. DPC has long sought this action.

CVERF SELECTS NEW CHAIRMAN

The trustees of DPC's Coachella Valley Ecological Reserve Foundation selected Dr. Allan Muth to serve as its new Chairman. Dr. Muth is the Director of the Deep Canyon Desert Research Center and is intimately acquainted with the area. He will apply his many talents to the promotion of educational and acquisition programs which are so essential to the success of the Reserve.

GOLDEN BEAR AWARD

On March 12, Joe Read, retiring Chairwoman of the Anza-Borrego Committee, received the Golden Bear Award from James Whitehead, chairman of the State Park & Recreation Commission. She was cited for her leadership in the transfer of over 6000 acres of private inholdings, with an assessed value of about $600,000, to Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.

Joe will continue to serve the ABC as gifts and donor coordinator.

BOARD ACTIONS, MARCH 27, 1982

e Desert Protective Council will:

upport BLM's Visibility and Air
uality Research Program

request Senators to maintain or
trengthen the provisions of the
lean Air Act and support the markup
ll in the Senate Environmental Com-
ttee and continue to oppose HR 5252
he Waxman bill

continue investigation as to the
umber of KGRAs (Known Geothermal
esource Areas) in WSAs and ACECs

urge BLM to push for geothermal
evelopment outside of WSAs & ACECs
rior to issuing permits for de-
lopment inside such areas

urge the California budget com-
ttees to release $3.5 million from
e Energy & Resources Fund for the
cquisition of rare and endangered
pecies and other wildlife habitats

urge the Public Works Board to re-
ease $300,000 immediately for the
rchase of 80 acres of critical
bitat for the Coachella Valley
cological Reserve

onitor the 1981 amendments to the
sert Plan as approved March 26th
y the Citizens' Advisory Committee

submit DPCs recommendations for
82 amendments and work with BLM to
etermine parameters for submittals

support State Parks & Recreation
aff recommendations for wilderness
lassification of eleven roadless
eas in Anza-Borrego State Park

oppose AB 2910 which would elimin-
te the Park & Recreation Commission
d vest its powers in the Director,
Governor's appointee

urge the relocation of the windmill
Antelope Valley Wildlife Reserve

testify at Congressional oversight
arings in Santa Ana on April 12
lative to oil and gas leasing in
ilderness areas and on State Park
nds where BLM retains subsurface
neral and geothermal rights

uthorized the Ex.Com. to determine DPCs position on amendments to the Wild Horse and Burro Act.

DPC reviewed many bills effecting wildlife: Eradication of predators within state parks & ecological reserves; bighorn trophy hunting; steel-jaw trapping; use of chemical 1080 for predator control. DPC will testify according to adopted policy.

DPC will monitor amendments to the route designation process proposed by BLM, especially in L & M areas.

Note to members: If you have ideas for routes that should be kept open or closed, contact Jim Dodson at DPC post office box.

Wildlife Chairman will check statistics of Bobcat population in desert.

Board approved in principle the concept of a volunteer work program to enhance and protect desert riparian systems. This will be a major DPC project during the next few years.

The Board reviewed the summary of Phase I of the Riparian program and will meet with other organizations to seek funding for completion of Phase I. DPC will coordinate program.

The Board commended and thanked:
- Joan Taylor for her weekly visits to the post office to sort and forward mail
- Glenn Vargas for his outstanding service as Executive Director and interim Chairman of CVERF
- Bill Holden for keeping accounts and records in order
- Joe Read for her fifteen years of service as ABC Chairman

DPC will not oppose the Fast Camel 4-wheel Drive Cruise as long as it remains outside of Wilderness Study Areas.

An extended discussion on goals was carried to campfire and early Sunday morning recessed sessions. Membership, fundraising and DPC image were discussed. The decisions: DPC will not enter into any sales program at this time. It will advertise in news letters. Professional fund-raising will be investigated. Programs for

- continued on page 4

DPC LAUNCHES RIPARIAN AND CRITICAL HABITAT PROTECTION PROGRAM

The Council is initiating a riparian and critical habitat protection and enhancement program on public lands in the California desert. It will include:

ADOPTION and MONITORING of selected areas, and,

VOLUNTEER WORK PARTIES for specific projects.

DPC will coordinate the efforts of individuals and conservation groups with the appropriate land management agency such as BLM and National Park Service. Work parties will assist the agency in maintenance, enhancement and protection projects which cannot be accomplished under current restrictions in budgets and personnel.

VOLUNTEERS will work in the field with agency staff members to:
- establish base line data and inventories
- improve habitat areas
- extend government productivity that has been curtailed by budget cuts
- promote better rapport with government agencies

SPECIFIC TASKS will include:
- water flow management
- removal and/or thinning of non-native, non-beneficial vegetation
- construction of livestock and burro exclosures
- range improvements such as provision of stock watering troughs which are separated from springs and seeps, especially those used by wildlife
- access controls

If you wish to participate in such efforts, please fill out the form below and mail it to DPC. You will be contacted when a work party is scheduled for the particular project that would benefit from your expertise or capabilities. Please send copies of this invitation to any of your friends who might wish to participate or send us their names and addresses or use extra sheets of paper.

Tear off below - mail to RHPP % DPC P.O. Box 4294, Palm Springs 92263

I WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN DPC's RIPARIAN & CRITICAL HABITAT PROGRAM

Name (please print)____

Address (print)______________________________City_______________zip_____

Phone(home)_________________________ (work)_________________________ _______

Type of vehicle: ___ 4-wheel drive pickup; ___2-wheel drive pickup;
___ 4-wheel drive; ___other(describe)_______________________

Tools & Equipment: ___chain saw;___post hole digger;___shovel;___pickaxe;
___compressor; ___cameras; other_______________________

Times available: ___weekends; ____weekdays

Which spring or habitat areas would you like to "adopt" or recommend for adoption? Give location on a USGS quad sheet, map or legal description:

____

If you have no specific site, what is your favorite desert area where you would be willing to assist on projects?_______________________________

Do you have special skills that you would be willing to share? Contractor, researcher, botanist, etc?______________________________________

PLEASE VOLUNTEER! TOGETHER WE CAN ACHIEVE WONDERS!

ounger students will be implemented.
t will emphasize "productive en-
onmental work" such as acquiring
holdings and critical habitat areas
d implementing programs such as the
ert-wide riparian system protec-
ion and enhancement project.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

lcome to the many new members who
ve joined since January!

, to you who have inadvertently
llowed your membership to become de-
inquent as of April 1st, please re-
n DPC today. If you are having
inancial problems, try the $5.00
ssociate membership.

need your good ideas and your
ontinuing support. Send check to
he DPC post office Box. If you have
her problems, contact me directly;
ame box number.

- Chuck Bell, President

WALK FOR DESERT GARDENS

In spite of depressing weather reports throughout Southern California, March 28th was a beautiful day at Fish Creek, Anza-Borrego State Park.

James Hendrix, Area Manager, greeted participants under bright skies. The featured speakers were James Whitehead, William Penn Mott, Jr. and "Bud" Getty, former Area Manager. He presented Joe Read with a Desert Garden from the Resources Division Coffee Fund (Sacramento) and a bronze ram's head from the Anza-Borrego Committee.

The Committee and DPC are grateful to Jim Hendrix and his staff who so skillfully and cordially managed the logistics of the occassion and to the specialists who lead the individual walks:
Mitchell Beauchamp, Fred Jee,
Mark Jorgensen, Paul Jorgensen,
Gary McLaughlin, Jean Morley,
Richard Phillips and John Ruddley.

THE DESERT PROTECTIVE COUNCIL INC.

To safeguard for wise and reverent use by this and succeeding generations those desert areas of unique scenic, scientific, historical, spiritual and recreational value and to educate by all appropriate means children and adults to a better understanding of the desert.

BOX 4294
PALM SPRINGS
CALIFORNIA 92263

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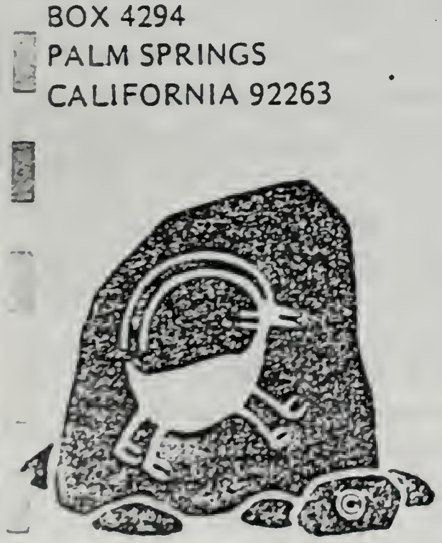
Thermal, CA 92274



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO CCOMMENTS SUBMITTED BY:

Harriet Allen

COMMENT #	RESPONSE
3.1	Comment noted. Further review will be given to the Navy lease areas if they are relinquished and come under BLM management. This can be done, and management prescriptions can be developed, in a future HMP update. Since no actions are currently planned which involve Navy Lease Lands, the Navy is not listed on page 16. However, their participation in the Interagency Coordinating Committee will be invited.
3.2	The term "pesticides" does not include herbicides and/or rodenticides.
3.3	The June 30, 1982 ruling affects the route apporval process, which is separate from the preparation of the HMP. The route approval process is being held in abeyance at present. However, during the preparation of the HMP and the processing of tentative route approval recommendations, pertinent input has been requested, and only routes which do not conflict with sensitive resource values are recommended.
3.4	The Yuha ACEC was prepared and finalized in 1981. Ninety copies of the draft plan were distributed for public review and comment. In addition, 257 letters of availability were also sent out.
3.5	The point of Action #7 is that racing in the East Mesa cannot be considered unless it is shown that its effects can be mitigated. Since racing has occurred consistently in the Yuha, it is the logical place to monitor impacts and the effectiveness of mitigations. However, the Yuha and East Mesa are different with regard to flora and soil. This will be taken into consideration if a race

COMMENT #	RESPONSE (continued)
3.5, continued.	course is proposed in the future for East Mesa. Also, if such an activity is permitted, extensive monitoring will be necessary to insure that if it does in fact prove to be determental to the resources involved, it will be discontinued.
3.6	In 1974, BLM formed an interdisciplinary task force to evaluate racing in the East Mesa. Racing on undesignated routes had been allowed for many years. The members of the task force agreed that a designated race course in East Mesa was desireable, and developed guidelines. BLM identified possible course routes, which were then evaluated in an Environmental Assessment (EA). Racing was halted, due to sensitive resource values. Any future consideration of racing will be in lieu of the earlier course, will deal with routes outside of highly sensitive areas, and will again be subject to an EA.
3.7	Public review of the present document is the initial opportunity for formal public input, both from individual landowners and from the general public. Also following the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) of a proposed exchange, a notice will be put in the Federal Register and in local newspapers inviting interested persons to request the EA for review.
3.8	The HMP's primary emphasis is on wildlife habitat preservation. Cultural resource management has been addressed in the Southern East Mesa ACEC Management Plan.
3.9	Comment noted. DPC assistance is welcome, and these avenues will be explored.

LETTER #4

United States Department of the Interior

MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE
WESTERN REGION
345 Middlefield Road
Menlo Park, CA 94025

IN REPLY REFER TO:
MS-92

JUL 26 1982

Memorandum

To: Bureau of Land Management, El Centro Resource Area, El Centro, CA

From: Acting Deputy Minerals Manager, Geothermal

Subject: Comments on the Draft East Mesa Wildlife Habitat Management Plan

The substance of the document is sound, and our comments are strictly editorial. Our comments are as follows:

4.1 Pg. 4, para. 1, line 9: "Sunflower" is spelled incorrectly.

4.2 Pg. 6, A-3, line 3: Should read, "and other selected terrestrial species."

4.3 Pg. 6, B-1, line 6: Should read, "and their prey bases have been determined."

4.4 Pg. 9, item 12, lines 3-5: The sentence starting, "Private access" was printed twice.

4.5 Pg. 12, A-1, line 1: "To" is spelled incorrectly.

4.6 Pg. 12, A-1, line 6: "Occurred" is spelled incorrectly.

4.7 Pg. 12, A-1, line 10: "Held" is spelled incorrectly.

4.8 Pg. 12, A-1, para. 2: Will ORV use interfere with geothermal or oil and gas activity?

4.9 Pg. 19, VI, item 2: "Priorities" is spelled incorrectly.

4.10 Pg. A-3, item 5: "Development" is spelled incorrectly.

4.11 Pg. A-7, item D, para. 2, line 1: "Negative" is spelled incorrectly.

4.12 Pg. A-3, item D, para. 2, line 3: Do you mean to say "non ACEC areas?"

4.13 Pg. A-9, E-2, line 2: "The" is spelled incorrectly.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this document.

William F. Isherwood

William F. Isherwood

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO COMMENT SUBMITTED BY:

William F. Isherwood
Western Region, Minerals Management Service

COMMENT #	RESPONSE
4.1	Change made.
4.2	Change made.
4.3	The clause "to be non-determental" is necessary. If there are significant negative impacts, attempts must be made to mitigate them. Also, indiscriminant pesticide use connot be encouraged if significant negetative effects occur to this Federal candidate species.
4.4	Sentence clarified. See page 5.
4.5	Change made.
4.6	Change made.
4.7	Change made.
4.8	It is not anticipated that these activities will conflict.
4.9	Change made.
4.10	Change made.
4.11	Change made.
4.12	Comment does not appear to correspond with the part of the Plan indicated.
4.13	Change made.

LETTER #5

July 26, 1982

Roger D. Zortman, Area Manager
El Centro Resource Area - BLM
El Centro, Ca. 92243

Re: Public Review - East Mesa Wildlife Habitat Management Plan

Dear Sir:

After studying the Draft Proposal I have the following comments to make:

Protection of the East Mesa area for the future has reasonable import if it is to be retained under the ACEC category. Also, protection of certain wildlife species now endangered merits a need for a fair balance in land planning.

5.1 However, it is necessary to plan for the future human needs which may alter completely future land usage. The geothermal, oil and gas, mineral, and/or agricultural potentials should be adequately reviewed in the years to come as supply, demand, or ability to extract become evident. The area should never be closed off.

5.2 Target shooting and hunting in the desert have become a hazard for many recreationists. To authorize a greater amount of this activity for a few individuals must be carefully weighed against other recreation activities. Hunting seasons are generally short-termed and therefore, self-disciplined; but even this type of sport needs adequate controls for hunting does not co-exist with other recreation activities unless rigid rules are made and then are enforced. If specific areas, especially in the ACEC's, are opened to hunting - and has happened with the desert tortoise and long-tailed rats or mice, one wonders how many flat-tailed lizards would become targets.

5.3 I am very much in favor of restricted and/or controlled ORV activity in the ACEC's, and also of requiring that all traffic be confined to existing or designated roads or 'ways'.

5.4 Much of the land in southern Imperial Valley is being reclaimed for agriculture. As more and more of the rich lands in California are being lost to other type of development, the area in question should be evaluated most carefully as to its future potential for agricultural development. All land suitable for this purpose and in private ownership should remain in private ownership to fit into the future land planning and zoning of Imperial Valley. If the private land is not suitable for agriculture and acquisition is beneficial to an overall Plan, then an equitable exchange or purchase would be acceptable.

I have been through this area many, many times but it is unfamiliar to me as a rockhound. However, all desert lovers have a protective feeling toward our public lands. Our interests are very much the same as other protective groups who have worked toward a balanced program for desert use. Altho I am Public Lands Liason for the San Diego Mineral & Gem Society, I am sending in this opinion as an individual since our Board of Directors will not meet until September.

5.5 I approve of the Management Objectives and Planned Actions as outlined on Pages 6 - 9 of the East Mesa Draft Wildlife Habitat Management Plan.

Sincerely,

Carmelita Swarts

1814 Malden St.
San Diego 92109

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO COMMENTS FROM:

Carmelita Swarts
Public Lands Liason
San Diego Mineral and Gem Society

COMMENT #	RESPONSE
5.1	Comment noted.
5.2	The HMP does not authorize any new or increased use with regard to target shooting or hunting.
5.3	Comment noted.
5.4	See Response 2.2.
5.5	Comment noted.

LETTER #6

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—RESOURCES AGENCY
EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
350 Golden Shore
Long Beach, California 90802

July 28, 1982

Mrs. Lillian Oleck
Bureau of Land Management
El Centro Resource Area
333 South Waterman Avenue
El Centro, California 92243

Dear Mrs. Oleck:

Mr. Keith Moore, our Area Fishery Biologist for Imperial County, has reviewed the East Mesa Wildlife Habitat Management Plan (Draft) and has the following comments and recommendations:

6.1 1. Page 2. It is recommended that the last sentence on this page be changed to read as follows: "Rather, it attempts to provide for competing land uses in a manner compatible with habitat preservation within the WHA."

This change is recommended because it has yet to be seen if the HMP will provide necessary management procedures.

6.2 2. Page 3. The last two paragraphs contain references to "full species lists" which are part of other reports (i.e. USDI, BLM 1981). These lists should be included in this management plan or appendices in order to provide a more complete document.

6.3 3. Page 4. Second paragraph refers to the California Desert Conservation Area Plan as covering this WHA in a broad manner. This broad coverage should be briefly discussed in the context of this management plan.

6.4 4. Page 5. This management plan should include a discussion of the present status of the Brock Research Center, along with a tentative management program for the area, in the event that it becomes available for habitat management efforts in the future.

6.5 5. Page 6. Item 2. Change to read as follows:

"2. Determine and maintain viable population levels of all native species of plants and animals along with all other species of special management concerns."

6.6 6. Page 6. Item 2. Delete "Allow", and begin the section as follows: "Require suitable mitigation for any geothermal leasing as per...".

6.7 7. Page 7. Item 3. Add the words "and the California Department of Fish and Game" after "authorized officer". This management plan is a cooperative effort between BLM and CDF&G, and the authority delegated by this plan must be shared jointly as equal partners.

.8 8. Page 7. Item 4. Delete the phrase "where applicable (based on survey information and feasibility)..." and insert the words: "Based on survey information require no surface occupancy and the use of...". Also the last sentence of this item should be changed to read "...require the use of existing roads".

9 9. Page 7. Item 6. Change to read as follows: "Require that only the existing routes of travel which do not conflict with...".

10 10. Page 8. Item 12. Include discussion of the possibility of exchanging or acquiring those portions of the WHA which are under the juridiction of the U.S. Navy should be provided.

.11 11. Page 9. Item 13. State how BLM presence will be increased in the WHA and to what extent.

.12 12. Page 9. Section II, item 14. Change to read as follows: "Prepare, install and maintain signs at all WHA access roads...".

.13 13. Page 10. Item 1. The second sentence should be changed from "The HMP recommends..."to "The HMP requires...".

.14 14. Page 11. Item 2. Give a synopsis of the pesticide study and how it will be completed.

.15 15. Page 11, item 3. The last sentence states that "these data will be used to determine whether competetive events, if permitted, should continue." If the data is found contrary to the best interests of the desert ecology in the WHA specify how will the events be stopped, who will stop them and the time limit.

.16 16. Page 12. Item 1. Second paragraph: Any connotation that competetive ORV use of the WHA is maintaining a "status quo" position even though it is in a period of abeyance should be removed. This sentence should be changed to read as follows: "Competitive ORV use of the WHA has not been permitted since 1974" or "BLM has not issued a permit for a competetive ORV event in the WHA since 1974".

.17 Also identify which racing enthusiasts are expressing an interest in an East Mesa race course and how or in what manner these interests are being expressed. The race course and ORV play area in and around Glamis is already destroying habitat in that area and there seems to be no reasonable justification to allow the adverse impacts of ORV use to be manifested in other areas of the East Mesa as well. Change the fourth and fifth sentences to read as follows: "The location of any proposed race course will be totally outside of the boundaries of the WHA and Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Existing travel routes will be utilized throughout the entire WHA and then only if they do not adversely impact any resource of the WHA on ACEC". .18

6.19 17. Page 14. Item 4. The last two sentences in the first paragraph should be changed to read as follows: "In areas not covered by the EAR, geothermal leasing will be precluded. Leasing will be permitted, with requirements for appropriate mitigation at all stages of development, including exploration drilling, production wells and operational facilities."

6.20 18. Pages 17 and 18. Section V, Cost and Funding Needs, Items B, 4 and C, 5. Land Exchange Program: CDF&G may be able to participate in the land acquisition program e.g. E.P.P. funding (personalized license plate funds).

.21 19. Page 19, Section VI. The third paragraph states "The District Manager will determine if any recommended modification are...". Amend this sentence by adding the words "and the CDF&G" after "The District Manager...". Also in the next paragraph, delete the words "with the concurrence of the District Manager."

These two changes are necessary in order to insure adequate continuity of effort in this cooperative program. Designation of a single authority to determine which, if any, joint management recommendations or modifications are major is inappropriate.

.22 20. Page A-2. Item 2. It is recommended that the conditions and guidelines set forth in the East Mesa Geothermal Leasing Environmental Record be included in this Management Plan.

.23 21. Page A-2. Item 3. In the fourth line after "Authorized officer" add the words "and the CDF&G:, (see-comment #19).

.24 22. Page A-2, Item 4. In the second line, change the word "recommend" to "require". Also on Page A-3, Item 5 change the word "recommendations" to "requirements".

.25 23. Page A-3, Item 6. Delete "all routes" and insert "only the presently (1982) existing routes of travel".

.26 24. Page A-3. Change item 7 to read as follows "Consider racing in the East Mesa, outside of the boundaries of the ACEC and WHA only after...".

6.27 25. Page A-4, Item 12. Include a discussion of the possibility of a land exchange/acquisition program for the area in the WHA which is held by the U.S. Navy.

6.28 26. Page A-4. Change Item 13 to read as follows: "Increase patrols by BLM rangers, CDF&G wardens and increase the presence of other BLM and CDF&G personnel.

6.29 27. Page A-4. Item 14 to read as follows : "Place signs at all WHA access roads...managed. Provide an information pamphlet to the public which discusses...management".

28. Page A-4, Section B. Change second line in first paragraph to read as
.30 follows: "...implemented, sensitive native wildlife values will be
negatively impacted by...".

29. Page A-6. Item 2. The last sentence should be deleted or changed to read
6.31 as follows: "Competitive events have not been permitted within the
boundaries of the WHA since 1974."

30. Page A-8, Section D. Change first sentence of the third paragraph to read
6.32 as follows: "...travel will be permitted within the boundaries of the WHA
(including the ACEC areas) on existing and approved routes only (class L)."
Also, change second sentence of the last paragraph to read as follows: "No
6.33 surface occupancy and slant drilling will be required where and when any
sensitive resources are involved".

The statement "which will increase project costs", is inappropriate for
inclusion in a wildlife habitat management plan. It is beyond the scope of
this cooperative management plan to evaluate or consider project costs for
.34 commercial development of energy resources in the WHA. Any such comments.
or statements are contrary to the objectives of a program designed to
manage, protect, and enchance wildlife and their associated habitat.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this Draft Habitat Management Plan. If you have any questions, please contact Keith Moore at (714) 356-5947.

Sincerely,

Keith R. Anderson

Keith R. Anderson
Fisheries Management Supervisor
Region 5

CC: Keith Moore, Holtville

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO COMMENT SUBMITTED BY:

Keith R. Anderson
California Department of Fish and Game

COMMENT #	RESPONSE
6.1	Change made.
6.2	Addition made.
6.3	The area is discussed from a wildlife perspective on pages 30-40 of the Desert Plan. Also see Appendix H.
6.4	Since the status of the Brock Research Center is extremely uncertain, it would be quite difficult to develop planned actions for all possible situations. When this situation is resolved, and if management of the area devolves to BLM, the HMP will be updated in cooperation with CDF&G to include management of the Brock Research Center.
6.5	See change, page 4.
6.6	Mitigations for geothermal development are included in the East Mesa Geothermal EAR. See change, page 4.
6.7	See change, page 4.
6.8	See change, page 4.
6.9	The HMP makes recommendations to the route designation process, which is separate from the HMP process. The HMP legally cannot designate routes as open or closed.
6.10	See Response 3.1.
6.11	Increased BLM patrols will occur as noted on pages 13-14. See also page 5.

COMMENT #	RESPONSE (continued)
6.12	See change, page 6.
6.13	BLM forwards requirement recommendations to MMS at the APD stage. MMS then attaches required mitigations as appropriate in addition to standard stipulation 9 (Enclosure II, CA 3100-14). CDF&G input regarding survey needs is welcome. CDF&G may wish to request to be included on the MMS mailing list and to respond directly to MMS.
6.14	The pesticide study will be developed in conjunction with CDF&G and other members of the proposed Interagency Coordinating Committee.
6.15	If competitive events are determined to be detrimental, BLM will no longer issue permits for competitive events in the East Mesa, if such events are ever permitted.
6.16	Change made.
6.17	AMA District 38 leadership and the Imperial Valley Motorcycle Club have verbally expressed an interest in having a designated race course in the East Mesa area.
6.18	During initial scoping and throughout management plan development, the possibility of future racing in the East Mesa has been discussed with CDF&G. CDF&G has continually concurred with and helped to develop all management prescriptions outlined in the HMP and ACEC Management Plan, including the exclusion of racing in the ACEC while not precluding the possibility of a race course which may be partially within the extra-ACEC portion of the HMP, utilizing existing travel routes where possible. This was agreed to at the initial scoping meeting on 2/17/82 by Assistant Wildlife Biologist Jesse Garcia, Assistant Fisheries Bioligist Keith Moore, and CDF&G's officially designated representative, Associate Fisheries Biologist Jim St. Amant. At subsequent coordination meetings on 3/15, 6/16, and 7/23/82, no modifications to this agreement were requested by CDF&G. These individuals were also given pre-draft

COMMENT #	RESPONSE (continued)
6.18, continued.	copies of the HMP for review, and did not express a desire to change earlier agreements. Planning for management of the area has proceeded with the full knowledge and consent of CDF&G, and with the understanding that BLM is mandated by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (P.L. 94-579) to a multiple-use management orientation. It must be reiterated that the HMP does not propose that a race course be implemented. In fact, it states that a race course will be considered only if any impacts appear to be mitigable.
6.19	BLM cannot arbitrarily preclude geothermal energy development. Any application must receive full consideration; however, impacts will be analysed, and mitigations for all phases of development involved in the application will be developed as part of the Environmental Assessment for the application, if it is approved.
6.20	CDF&G's participation in the proposed land exchange program is welcome.
6.21	See change, page 15.
6.22	See addition, Appendix E, page E - 1.
6.23	See Response 6.7.
6.24	See Response 6.8.
6.25	See Response 6.9.
6.26	See Response 6.16.
6.27	See Response 3.1.
6.28	Change made.
6.29	See change, page A-3.
6.30	Word "native" has been added. Substitution of "will" for "may" has not been done because, in the absence of the HMP, site-specific evaluations and mitigations would occur.

COMMENT #	RESPONSE (continued)
6.31	Change made.
6.32	The HMP must be consistent with the Desert Plan Motorized Vehicle Access Element designations.
6.33	See Response 6.8.
6.34	See page A-5.

State of California
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
OFFICE OF PLANNING AND RESEARCH
1400 TENTH STREET
SACRAMENTO 95814

DMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

Roger Zortman, Area Manager
Bureau of Land Management
333 S. Waterman Avenue
El Centro, CA 92243

SUBJECT: SCH# 82070451 East Mesa Wildlife Habitat Mangement Plan

Dear Mr. Zortman:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named environmental document to selected state agencies for review. The review period is closed and none of the state agencies have comments.

This letter certifies only that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (EIR Guidelines, Section 15161.5). Where applicable, this should not be construed as a waiver of any jurisdictional authority or title interests of the State of California.

The project may still require approval from state agencies with permit authority or jurisdiction by law. If so, the state agencies will have to use the environmental document in their decision-making. Please contact them immediately after the document is finalized with a copy of the final document, the Notice of Determination, adopted mitigation measures, and any statements of overriding considerations.

Once the document is adopted (negative declaration) or certified (final EIR) and if a decision is made to approve the project, a Notice of Determination must be filed with the County Clerk. If the project requires discretionary approval from any state agency, the Notice of Determination must also be filed with the Secretary for Resources (EIR Guidelines, Sections 15083 (f) and 15085 (h)).

Sincerely,

Donna Morrow

for Charles E. Brandes
Deputy Director for Project Coordination

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY:

State of California
OPR Clearinghouse

No response necessary.

LETTER #8

DART
DESERT AREA
RESEARCH TEAM

Reply to: Richard T. Gochnaur
8202 Vista del Rosa
Downey, Ca. 90240

Roger Zortman
Area Manager
El Centro Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
333 South Waterman Avenue
El Centro, Ca. 92243

July 28, 1982

Sir,

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the draft East Mesa Habitat Management Plan.

In general, we believe that the proposed plan is acceptable and appropriate. The proposed actions should be of considerable benefit to the wildlife resources of this area.

Please keep us informed of future developments in this area.

Sincerely,

Richard T. Gochnaur
Richard T. Gochnaur
Director
Desert Area Research Team

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO
COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY:

Richard T. Gochnaur
Director
DART

No response necessary.

In addition to written comments, a telephone call was received from a private landowner requesting that his land be excluded from the proposed land exchange/acquisition program. The following written response was sent.

H. DESERT PLAN CONSTRAINTS

The following is a summary of the constraints imposed by the Desert Plan under which the East Mesa HMP was prepared:

1. Agriculture	Agricultural uses may be allowed on suitable land classified for these purposes. Prospective leases for potential desert crops, e.g. jojoba, guayule or others, may be allowed only after NEPA requirements are met.
2. Air Quality	These areas will be mandated to protect their air quality and visibility in accordance with Class II objectives of Part C of the Clean Air Act Amendments unless otherwise designated another class by the State of California (see USC 7474, and the final regulations, if and when promulgated) as a result of recommemdations developed by any BLM air quality management plan.
3. Water Quality	Areas designated in these classes will be managed to minimize degradation of the water resources. Best management practices, developed by the Bureau during the planning process outlined in the Clean Water Act, Section 208, and subsequently, will be used to avoid degradation and to comply with Executive Order 12088.
4. Cultural and Paleontological Resources	Archaeological and paleontological values will be preserved and protected. Procedures described in 36 CFR 800 will be observed where applicable. A Memorandum of Agreement has been signed by the BLM, the California State Historic Preservation Officer, and for cultural resources the President's Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to protect cultural resource values.
5. Native American Values	Native American cultural and religious values will be preserved where relevant and protected where applicable. Native American group(s) shall be consulted. Memorandums of Agreement and Understanding have been signed between BLM and the Native American Heritage Commission pertaining to Native American concerns and cultural resources.

6. Electrical Generation Facilities	All types of electrical generation plants may be allowed in accordance with State, Federal, and local laws. Existing facilities may be maintained and upgraded or improved in accordance with special use permits or by amendments to rights-of-way.
- Nuclear and Fossil Fuel Powerplants	May be allowed in accordance with Federal, State, and local laws.
- Wind/Solar Powerplants	May be allowed after NEPA requirements are met.
- Geothermal Powerplants	May be allowed pursuant to licenses issued under 43 CFR Section 3250, et. seq. NEPA requirements will be met.
7. Transmission Facilities	New gas, electric, and water transmission and trans-desert telecommunications facilities may be allowed only within designated corridors. NEPA requirements will be met. Existing facilities within designated corridors may be maintained and upgraded or improved in accordance with existing right-of-way grants or by amendments to right-of-way grants.
- Distribution Facilities	Existing facilities may be maintained and upgraded or improved in accordance with existing right-of-way grants. New distribution facilities may be allowed and shall be placed within existing rights-of-way where they are reasonably available. NEPA requirements will be met.
8. Communication Sites	New sites may be allowed. NEPA requirements will be met. Existing facilities may be maintained and utilized in accordance with right-of-way grants and applicable regulations.

9. Fire Management	Fire suppression measures will be taken in accordance with specific fire management plans subject to such conditions as the authorized officer deems necessary, such as use of motorized vehicles, aircraft, and fire retardant chemicals.
10. Vegetation - Harvesting (Native Plant)	Removal of vegetation, commercial or non-commercial, may be allowed by permit only after NEPA requirements are met and after development of necessary stipulations.
- Harvesting by Mechanical Equipment	Harvesting by mechanical equipment may be allowed by permit only.
- Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species, State and Federal	All state and federally listed species will be fully protected. Actions which may jeopardize the continued existence of federally listed species will require consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Sensitive Plant Species (including candidates for listing by FWS; FWS Species of Concern; species on List 2, CNPS, 1980)	Identified species will be given protection in management decisions consistent with BLM policies.
- Unusual Plant Assemblages (UPAs)	Identified UPAs will be considered when conducting all site-specific environmental impact analyses to minimize impact. See also Wetland/Riparian Areas guidelines.
- Vegetation Manipulation 1. Mechanical Control	Mechanical control may be allowed, but only after consideration of possible impacts.
2. Chemical Control	Spot applications will be allowed after site-specific planning. Types and uses of pesticides, in particular herbicides, must conform to Federal, State, and local regulations (see Vegetation Element).
3. Exclosures	Exclosures may be allowed.

11.	Land-Tenure Adjustment	Lands will be acquired, disposed of, or exchanged in accordance with FLPMA and other applicable Federal laws and regulations, to assure more efficient management of the public lands and to reduce conflicts with other public and private landowners to provide more consistency and logic in desert-wide land-use patterns.
12.	Mineral Exploration and Development	Leasable Minerals: Except as provided in Appendix 5.4, 516 DM 6, NEPA Procedures titled "Categorical Exclusions," prior to issuing any mineral leases, an EA will be prepared on the proposed leasing action. Mitigation measures will be required to protect sensitive scenic, ecological, wildlife, vegetative, and cultural values. Prior to any operations upon mineral leases, the operator shall submit the appropriate notices or applications to BLM or the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), as appropriate, as specified in 43 CFR 3100, 3200, 3500. All applications submitted to the USGS shall be treated under existing joint BLM/USGS procedures (i.e., SO 2948) and other applicable regulations. Reclamation requirements are contained within these procedures. Locatable Minerals: Location of mining claims is nondiscretionary. Operations on mining claims are subject to the 43 CFR 3809 Regulations and applicable State and local law. In most instances, plans of operations shall be required and treated as specified in the above regulation. NEPA requirements will be met. BLM will review plans of operations for potential impacts on sensitive resources identified on lands in this class. Appropriate mitigation will be required.

	Saleable Minerals: Except as provided in Appendix 5.4, 516 DM 6, NEPA Procedures titled "Categorical Exclusions," new material sales locations, including sand and gravel sites, will require an EA.
	Continued use of existing areas of existing areas of sand and gravel extractions is allowed subject to BLM permits, as specified in 43 CFR 3600.
13. Motorized-Vehicle Access Transportation	Motorized-vehicle use will be allowed on "existing" routes of travel unless designated closed by the authorized officer.
	Vehicle use on some major dunes and dry lakebeds may be allowed (see Motorized-Vehicle Access Element).
	Periodic or seasonal closure of routes of travel may be required.
	Compliance with Executive Orders 11644 and 11989 as applied to motorized-vehicle access will be assured.
- Railroads	Railroads and trams may be allowed.
- Aircraft	Airports and landing strips may be allowed by lease subject to conformance with county or regional airport plans and FAA and DOD approval.
14. Recreation	This class is suitable for a wide range or recreation activities which may involve moderate to high use densities. Recreational opportunities include activities such as backpacking, primitive, unimproved site camping, hiking, horseback riding, rockhounding, land-sailing on dry lakes, non-competitive vehicle touring and events only on "approved" routes of travel.
	Permanent or temporary facilities for resource protection and public health and safety are allowed.
	Trails are open for non-vehicular use and new trails for non-motorized access may be allowed.

15.	Waste Disposal	Public lands managed by BLM may not be used for hazardous waste disposal. Where locations suitable for such disposal are found on BLM managed lands, consideration will be given to transfer of such sites to other ownership for this use. Non-hazardous waste disposal sites may be allowed.
16.	Wildlife Species and Habitat (Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species, both State and Federal)	All State and federally listed species and their critical habitat will be fully protected. Actions which may affect or jeopardize the continued existence of federally listed species will require formal consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species.
	- Sensitive Species	Identified species will be given protection in management decisions consistent with BLM policies.
	- Predator and Pest Control	Control of depredating wildlife and pests will be allowed in accordance with existing State and Federal laws.
	- Habitat Manipulation	Projects to improve wildlife habitat may be allowed subject to environmental assessment.
	- Reintroduction or Introduction of Established Exotic Species	Reintroduction or introduction of native species or established exotic species is allowed.
17.	Wetland/Riparian Areas	Wetland/riparian areas will be considered in all proposed land-use actions. Steps will be taken to provide that these unique characteristics and ecological requirements are managed in accordance with Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands (42 CFR 26951), legislative ans Secretarial direction, and BLM Manual 6740, "Wetland-Riparian Area Protection and Management" (10/1/79), as outlined in the Vegetation Element.